



ASSOCIATION FOR TOURISM  
AND LEISURE EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

**ATLAS Annual Conference 2026**  
**Community, Collaboration and Co-creation**  
**in Times of Crisis**  
**Leeds, United Kingdom**  
**June 23-26, 2026**

**ABSTRACT BOOK**



**LEEDS  
BECKETT  
UNIVERSITY**

# Introduction

## Community, Collaboration and Co-creation in Times of Crisis

We live in a time of multiple, intersecting crises that are shaping new ways of engaging with and experiencing tourism. These crises include growing inequalities, threats to democracies, social fragmentation, the rise of populism and nationalism, forced displacement, climate change, global oligarchies, the increasing power of technocracy, wars, and pandemics. These changes and challenges not only refine the meaning of communities but also influence how collaborative and participatory patterns emerge and evolve among tourism stakeholders.

In traditional anthropology and sociology, the concept of communities has often been framed in unproblematic terms (Jørgensen, 2024). However, recent global geo-political, ecological and economic shifts have contributed to a more critical examination of this concept. Communities are typically defined as groups that share a common geographical or physical space (Urry, 2001) but also belong to the same social group. In discussing the local turn in tourism, Higgins-Desbiolles and Bigby (2022, p.2) define local communities as “more than just a certain group of people associated with a place. Instead, we are more broadly inclusive of the local community, the local ecology (living air, land and waterscapes and more-than-human beings) and all generations pertaining to that place (including future ones)”.

The concept is further problematised in relation to growing divisions, polarised identities and ideologies, global misinformation (via the web, for example) and human/non-human exploitation. In acknowledging the contradictions, ‘fractures and disenchantments’ of our time (Braidotti, 2019, p.36), Rosi Braidotti calls for closer scrutiny on the meaning and entanglements of ‘we’ (p.37). This invites a critical reconsideration of how our shared condition shapes understandings of who ‘we’ are and to what extent, we can argue, we are in *this* together.

The possibilities and potentials of our collective praxis and aspirations to navigate, through transformation and resistance, fractures and ‘irreconcilable power differences’ (Braidotti, 2019, p.43), allow us to consider the heterogeneity and diversity of relational subjects (both human and non-human) and approaches. Accordingly, Braidotti (2019, p.157) argues that “we-are-in-*this*-together-but-we-are-*not*-one-of-the-same” (italics in the original). This highlights that our heterogeneity is defined by social categories such as class, race, sexual orientation, able-bodiedness but also by power, norms, values, privileges, rights, entitlements (Braidotti, 2019). The multiplicity of relational, heterogeneous subjects forms communities that must act together to reclaim power, agency and freedom.

Within the leisure context of tourism and events, we focus on the affirmative possibilities that community participation can forge through collaboration, driven by the shared aspiration of empowerment, fairness and inclusion. However, this is not without challenges, as communities’ involvement, participation and co-production are often hindered by the “structural injustices under which tourism operates” (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2020, p.616). Localising (Freya Higgins-Desbiolles and Bigby, 2022) and socialising tourism (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2020) may open possibilities for greater justice and well-being for local communities and, more broadly, for all tourism stakeholders.

For this conference, we invite contributions from a wide range of multi-, intra- and transdisciplinary fields on ways community participatory and collaborative approaches unfold in tourism destinations. We encourage critical debates on innovative and creative theoretical, methodological and practical community approaches to collaboration and co-creation within

the fields of events, tourism and hospitality. Furthermore, we seek thought-provoking insights into the factors that might hinder such approaches. In reflecting on how, if and to what extent collaboration and co-creation develop in tourism contexts, we pose the following questions:

- How do power structures influence collaboration and co-creation in tourism destinations?
- What power dynamics influence collaborative approaches to tourism?
- How do collaboration and co-creation unfold in a time of multiple, intersecting crises? Which crises are the most influential, and how can they be overcome through community involvement and collaboration?
- How do communities respond locally to global changes and challenges?
- To what extent are grassroots movements and approaches influential in shaping co-creation of types of tourism that benefit destinations and communities? Have these evolved over time and in response to the multiple crises experienced globally?
- What are the enablers and barriers to developing collaboration and co-creation within the tourism sector between Western and Indigenous approaches?
- How do collaborative approaches develop over a human/non-human continuum?

## References

- Braidotti, R. (2019). *Posthuman knowledge* (Vol. 2). Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Jørgensen, M. T., Sundbo, J., & Fuglsang, L. (2024). Co-creating communities of place in second home tourism. *Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism*, 24(2), 153-172.
- Higgins-Desbiolles, F. (2021). Socialising tourism for social and ecological justice after COVID-19. In *Global tourism and COVID-19* (pp. 156-169). Routledge.
- Higgins-Desbiolles, F., & Bigby, B. C. Embracing the Local Turn in Tourism to Empower Communities.
- Higgins-Desbiolles, F. and Bigby, B.C. (2022) A local turn in tourism studies. *Annals of Tourism Research* 92, 103291. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2021.103291>.
- Urry, J. (2001). The sociology of space and place. *The Blackwell companion to sociology*, 1(1), 3-15.



LEEDS  
BECKETT  
UNIVERSITY

# Contents

<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>Community, Collaboration and Co-creation in Times of Crisis</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>Contents</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>Keynote Speakers</b> .....	<b>13</b>
Raoul Bianchi.....	13
Sandro Carnicelli .....	14
Anna de Jong.....	14
<b>Biosketches</b> .....	<b>15</b>
<b>ATLAS SIG Events Podcast Series</b> .....	<b>45</b>
<b>ATLAS 2026 Visual research in Tourism Workshop proposal</b> .....	<b>46</b>
<b>Tourism’s Horizon: Travel for the Millions book announcement</b> .....	<b>48</b>
<b>Abstracts</b> .....	<b>49</b>
<b>Leveraging Kidfluence: FReconceptualizing Child Agency within Sustainable Tourism Governance and Rights-Based Frameworks</b> .....	<b>49</b>
Anna Abelson.....	49
<b>Creative Tourism and the Politics of Avatar Concerts</b> .....	<b>49</b>
Naf Ahmed .....	49
<b>Social Dynamics and Career Trajectories in Fringe Festivals</b> .....	<b>50</b>
Jane Ali-Knight .....	50
Lizette Oliver .....	50
Kirsten Holmes.....	50
David Jarman .....	50
<b>Emotional Synchrony in Cross-Border Festival Experiences</b> .....	<b>51</b>
Giulia Alonzo.....	51
Emma Wood .....	51
<b>Social regeneration in tourism work: perspectives from employees and managers</b> .....	<b>52</b>
Mari Angeria.....	52
<b>Menyama Braya and Transformative Governance: How Social Capital and Brotherhood Enable Sustainable Community-Led Tourism in Bali’s Rural Destination</b> .....	<b>53</b>
Komang Trisna Pratiwi Arcana.....	53
Thérèse Conway .....	53
Maura Farrell.....	53
<b>Inclusive by Design: Investigating Hospitality Servicescape Accessibility for Neurodiverse Staff and Guests</b> .....	<b>54</b>
Mark Ashton .....	54
Tracy Xu.....	54
Kevin Li .....	54
Brana Jianu.....	54
<b>Business Cases: Is “Entrepreneurship through Acquisition (ETA)” the only way for a community to keep its tourist attractions in operation? The case of ski areas in Canada.</b> ....	<b>54</b>
Sylvain Audet .....	54
<b>An Intersectional Lens on Muslim Women’s Sports Spectatorship in Malaysia</b> .....	<b>56</b>
Fatin Nabilah Azren.....	56
Davide Sterchele.....	56
Chen Zheng .....	56
Ellie May.....	56

<b>Researching children in the metaverse: Gaining access for ethnography in Roblox .....</b>	<b>56</b>
Fiona Eva Bakas .....	56
Mario Imperioso .....	56
<b>“F*ing Tourists”: Sobriquets as Displaced Power Struggle in the Era of Touristification .....</b>	<b>57</b>
Nika Balomenou .....	57
Peter Burns .....	57
<b>From runways to railways: What's holding us back from greener travel .....</b>	<b>58</b>
Jana Bartová .....	58
<b>Regenerative Tourism – Conceptual Narrowing or Substantive Advancement? .....</b>	<b>58</b>
Christian Baumgartner .....	58
<b>Return of Large Predators: Multi-Stakeholder Co-Creation of Sustainable Tourism Solutions in Alpine Regions .....</b>	<b>59</b>
Christian Baumgartner .....	59
Lynn Suter .....	59
<b>Evolving Tourism Complex Systems and Resilient Responses in Small Islands Destinations (SID's) .....</b>	<b>60</b>
Daniel Blasco .....	60
Kyriaki Glyptou .....	60
Rodolfo Baggio .....	60
<b>Posthumanist theory and tourism practice: From performance indicators to impact-in-progress .....</b>	<b>61</b>
Daniel Blasco .....	61
Jaume Guia .....	61
Natàlia Ferrer-Roca .....	61
<b>Redefining Success and Failure: Cost, Quality and Time in Events .....</b>	<b>61</b>
Glenn Bowdin .....	61
Emma Wood .....	61
Neelu Seetaram .....	61
<b>Political grassroots reimagination of tourism to reclaim the rights to the place .....</b>	<b>62</b>
Elisa Burrai .....	62
Stefan Lazic .....	62
Lucia Tomassini .....	62
<b>Volunteer Tourism in a Time of Polycrisis .....</b>	<b>63</b>
Elisa Burrai .....	63
Davide Sterchele .....	63
<b>Volunteer tourists and digital nomads: citizens of anywhere? .....</b>	<b>64</b>
Jim Butcher .....	64
<b>Acts of Environmental Awareness as Community Resistance in Regional Theatres in Ireland .....</b>	<b>64</b>
Ben McCabe .....	64
<b>From Playbour to Care: Reframing Volunteer Labour in Music Festivals through a Post-Growth Lens .....</b>	<b>65</b>
Luigi Cernigliaro .....	65
Giulia Alonzo .....	65
<b>Diffusing Opportunity: Township Residents’ Readiness for Water Tourism Participation in South Africa .....</b>	<b>65</b>
Michael Chambwe .....	65
<b>From awareness to moral obligation: A Cross-Cultural Norm-Activation Model (NAM) Perspective in Overtourism Contexts .....</b>	<b>66</b>
Kang Wook Cho .....	66
Patrick Merle .....	66
Sanghoon Lee .....	66
<b>Knowing the hikers - the case of Rila NP, Bulgaria .....</b>	<b>67</b>
Siya Cholakova .....	67

<b>Tourism development and spatial justice in Tenerife .....</b>	<b>67</b>
Nuria Cortes-Romero .....	67
Cristina Figueroa Domecq.....	67
Anna de Jong .....	67
<b>Complexity-aware design: tackling tourism complexity through systems practice .....</b>	<b>68</b>
Gloria Crabolu .....	68
<b>Destination marketing organisations: envisioning a regenerative tourism operating model.</b>	<b>69</b>
Gloria Crabolu .....	69
Anna Torres-Delgado.....	69
Alector Manuel Ribeiro.....	69
<b>The duality of Ainu visual representation: colonial spectacle and contemporary absence ...</b>	<b>70</b>
Melissa Cummings.....	70
<b>Animals in nature or animals as nature: Tensions in nature-based tourism.....</b>	<b>70</b>
Kate Dashper .....	70
Adele Doran .....	70
Jason King .....	70
<b>Caring for the city - Placemaking in Tourism and Urban Development .....</b>	<b>71</b>
Cornelia Dlabaja.....	71
<b>Problematic Heritage for Sale? Students' Perceptions of Ottoman &amp; Communist Heritage in Bulgaria .....</b>	<b>71</b>
Elka Dogramadjieva .....	71
<b>Worker Well-being and Social Dialogue in Platformised Tourism and Hospitality .....</b>	<b>72</b>
Tara Duncan .....	72
Fiona Bakas .....	72
Monica Coros .....	72
Dora Fonesca.....	72
Tania Gaspar .....	72
Stanislav Ivanov.....	72
Eleonora Rossi.....	72
Michela Trentin.....	72
<b>Assessing the effects of magnet-motor beds on housekeeping employees' health .....</b>	<b>73</b>
Laia Encinar-Prat .....	73
Brina Antúñez Pineda .....	73
Anais Cavallin .....	73
<b>Experiential learning among young people during study trips to Holocaust memorial sites.</b>	<b>74</b>
Laia Encinar-Prat .....	74
Marta Salvador-Almela.....	74
<b>Measuring Heritage Visitor Experience in Situ: Operationalising a Multidimensional Model in Practice.....</b>	<b>74</b>
Liese Exelmans.....	74
<b>Supporting Digital Innovation in the Blue Economy for sustainable tourism .....</b>	<b>75</b>
Ann Fitzgerald .....	75
Fiona Scott Hayward.....	75
Mary Rose Stafford .....	75
<b>Citizen science in tourism: co-created narratives for fostering regenerative thinking in urban areas .....</b>	<b>76</b>
Clotilde Formica .....	76
<b>Holding Up the Tower of Pisa: An Exploration of Structured Representation, Playful Practice, and Tourist Agency Through Images and Video.....</b>	<b>77</b>
Brian Garrod.....	77
Nika Balomenou.....	77
Antonis Kyparissis.....	77
Aggelos Panayiotopoulos.....	77
<b>Hotels as Community Anchors for Everyday Resilience in Polycrisis.....</b>	<b>77</b>
Ronja Geißendörfer.....	77
Vanessa Borkmann.....	77

<b>Exploration of The Influence of Menu Writing in the Irish Food Sector .....</b>	<b>78</b>
James Grimes .....	78
Angela Wright.....	78
<b>From dark pasts to opera at the Arena: Repurposing heritage at Verona’s historic city centre .....</b>	<b>79</b>
Adrian Guachalla.....	79
<b>REConnect: Regenerative leisure practices, ecological justice and community-led nature recovery in a river catchment landscape.....</b>	<b>79</b>
Jenny Hall .....	79
<b>Co-Creating Regenerative Tourism Futures: Preliminary Insights from Participatory Action Research in Iceland.....</b>	<b>80</b>
Annika Hanau.....	80
<b>Community-Based Tourism: crises of collaboration? .....</b>	<b>81</b>
Karen Harris.....	81
CR Botha.....	81
<b>Festival Fever: Curating and Commodifying Communities?.....</b>	<b>82</b>
Karen Harris.....	82
CR Botha.....	82
<b>‘Whose community? Taipu Culture, Power, and Participation in Shinjuku Nichome’ .....</b>	<b>82</b>
Katsuya Hasegawa .....	82
<b>Community Participation in Sustainable Mobility Transitions: Insights from Lab Sälenfjällen .....</b>	<b>83</b>
Tobias Heldt.....	83
Beatrice Waleghwa .....	83
<b>Chicken or Champion: The Atlantic Salmon in the Anthropocene .....</b>	<b>84</b>
Gudrún Helgadóttir.....	84
Helgi Thorarensen.....	84
<b>Best City, Best Model: Cape Town &amp; Regenerative Tourism.....</b>	<b>84</b>
Ruan Henning .....	84
<b>Capturing heritage: a case study of co-creation and collaboration in Mamelodi, South Africa .....</b>	<b>85</b>
Charlene Herselman .....	85
Hannes Engelbrecht.....	85
Martina Jordaan .....	85
Chris Nkomo .....	85
Mfana Mathibela.....	85
<b>Viral voyages: the impact of popular culture on tourism, heritage and community .....</b>	<b>86</b>
Charlene Herselman .....	86
<b>Tourism in declining town centres – overcoming systemic development barriers .....</b>	<b>86</b>
Anne-Mette Hjalager .....	86
Jesper Piihl.....	86
Steffen Korsgaard .....	86
<b>Circling to land - Travel and tourism in uncertain times. Findings from a global study with leading tourism voices in place, academia and industry.....</b>	<b>87</b>
Donagh Horgan.....	87
Ko Koens.....	87
<b>The spectral resident voice within the bio-politics of regional DMO formation .....</b>	<b>88</b>
Michael Humbracht .....	88
Anna de Jong.....	88
Annelie Sjölander Lindqvist.....	88
<b>AI Adoption Dynamics, Barriers, and Opportunities in Travel Agencies: Practitioner Perspectives from Northern Portugal .....</b>	<b>89</b>
Alexandra I. Correia .....	89
Carlos Fernandes.....	89
Matilde Cruz e Sara Paiva.....	89

<b>Hospidarity and volunteerism in safe places .....</b>	<b>89</b>
Anna Irimias .....	89
Ariel Mitev .....	89
<b>“Elephants in our backyards”: Tourism as conflict mitigation in Sri Lanka.....</b>	<b>90</b>
Anuradhi Jayasinghe.....	90
Georgette Leah Burns.....	90
<b>Family holidays with autistic children: A study of parents’ emotion work and service delivery .....</b>	<b>91</b>
Allan Jepson.....	91
Raphaela Stadler .....	91
Brian Garrod.....	91
<b>Designing Integrative AI for Hospitality: Rethinking SMEs’ Digital Futures .....</b>	<b>91</b>
Xinyue Jiang.....	91
<b>Recognising Women within Platform Work: Case of Ridehailing in the Global South.....</b>	<b>92</b>
Abbie-Gayle Johnson.....	92
<b>Reframing LGBTQ+-Friendly Destination Image in Thailand through SOGIE: An Ethics and Care Perspective .....</b>	<b>93</b>
Antony King Fung Wong .....	93
Thanakarn Bella Vongvisitsin .....	93
<b>From Food Tourism to Place Branding in the Pursuit of Sustainability &amp; Resilience .....</b>	<b>94</b>
Stella Kladou .....	94
Nikolaos Trihas .....	94
Georgios Apladas.....	94
Eirini Papadaki .....	94
Markos Kourgiantakis.....	94
<b>Human or Artificial? Consumer Preferences for/against AI-Mediated Services in Wine Tourism Settings .....</b>	<b>95</b>
Stella Kladou .....	95
Kyuho Lee .....	95
Ahmet Usakli.....	95
<b>Place, Ecological, and System Literacies: A Community-Driven Framework for Regenerative Tourism in the Arctic.....</b>	<b>95</b>
Kati Koivunen.....	95
Sanna-Mari Renfors .....	95
<b>Regenerating coastal socio-ecological systems: Applying living systems thinking in tourism product development .....</b>	<b>96</b>
Kati Koivunen .....	96
Henna Konu .....	96
Sanna-Mari Renfors .....	96
Elli Vento.....	96
<b>Sachs’ Sustainable Development Theory and Tourism Circuits in Brazil: Conceptual.....</b>	<b>97</b>
<b>Convergences .....</b>	<b>97</b>
Ricardo Lemos Pimenta.....	97
<b>Shaping Place through Food: Culinary Tourism and Urban Transformation .....</b>	<b>97</b>
Qingli Lin .....	97
<b>How relocalizing food feeds just tourism: Social solidarity efforts in Costa Rica .....</b>	<b>98</b>
Mary Little.....	98
<b>Desired futures in tourist-oriented rural areas in Croatia: a scenario-based approach.....</b>	<b>99</b>
Aleksandar Lukic.....	99
Petra Radeljak Kaufmann .....	99
<b>Co-Designing regenerative tourism in the Brecks.....</b>	<b>100</b>
Nikki MacLeod.....	100
Wenjie Cai.....	100
Isabella Qing Ye.....	100
Hai Nguyen .....	100

<b>Reimagining Event Impact through Co-Created Urban Practices.....</b>	<b>100</b>
Sarah Maes.....	100
Yana Avramova.....	100
<b>Co-creating Resistance to Overtourism: Participatory Filmmaking with Local Associations in the Cinque Terre and Venice.....</b>	<b>101</b>
Nicola Mai.....	101
<b>Creative Tourism and Counteracting Right-Wing Activism: Insights from the European Capital of Culture, Chemnitz.....</b>	<b>102</b>
Robin Marlow.....	102
<b>Experience and identity in the Brazilian Carnival.....</b>	<b>103</b>
Lenia Marques.....	103
Greg Richards.....	103
Vinicius R. A. Teixeira.....	103
<b>Climate Change, Normalized Crisis, and the Limits of Adaptive Governance in Jamaica's Tourism Sector.....</b>	<b>103</b>
Glenville Mcleod.....	103
<b>Investigating Tourism Impacts in a Medium-sized City Context – A Framework for Analysis. The Case of Trier, Germany.....</b>	<b>104</b>
Michael Miessner.....	104
Fabian Frenzel.....	104
<b>A Multi-Generational Lens on the Pet-Friendly Hotel Experience.....</b>	<b>104</b>
Nadja Mlakar.....	104
Mihaela Franjić.....	104
<b>Imagining Futures of Winter tourism through Collaborative Scenarios &amp; Design Fiction....</b>	<b>105</b>
Jan Mosedale.....	105
Emmanuelle George.....	105
<b>Memefication and Dissonance: The Case of Black Travel and Civil Rights Tourism in Montgomery.....</b>	<b>106</b>
Rasul Mowatt.....	106
Tynasha McCullers.....	106
<b>Remembering Bhopal: Tourism and Ongoing Injustice.....</b>	<b>106</b>
Rajesh Nautiyal.....	106
<b>Participation, power, and tourism in the Vlach community of Kato Vermio (Seli), Greece... </b>	<b>107</b>
Stefania Ntregka.....	107
Christina Papagianouli.....	107
<b>Exploring Power Dynamics in Community-Governed Tourism Conservancies in Kenya using Political Ecology as Analytical Framework.....</b>	<b>108</b>
Edwin Obombo Magio.....	108
<b>Systems Thinking Perspective on Sub-national Tourism Governance in Emerging Economies.....</b>	<b>108</b>
Paulina Onyeka.....	108
Eleni Michopoulou.....	108
Faith Samkange.....	108
<b>Exploring the Motivation behind Silver Tourist Repeat Visits and Meaning Attached to Place.....</b>	<b>109</b>
Sandra Osigwe.....	109
<b>Urban Tourism in Transition: Exploring Postgrowth Policy Approaches in London.....</b>	<b>110</b>
Ilaria Pappalepore.....	110
Cristina Maxim.....	110
<b>Negotiating tourism legitimacy: evolution, governance and agency in Barcelona (2010–2025).....</b>	<b>111</b>
Ana Pastor Alcaraz.....	111
Isabel Paulino.....	111
Oriol Gallardo.....	111
Cinta Sanz.....	111

<b>Governing tourism in a fragile socio-ecological system: post-growth pathways in the Venetian Lagoon and Metropolitan Area .....</b>	<b>112</b>
Ana Pastor Alcaraz .....	112
Irene Pinto.....	112
<b>From Label to integrated Governance: Co-creating the Terres de l'Ebre Biosphere Reserve .....</b>	<b>113</b>
Isabel Paulino.....	113
Antoni Domenech.....	113
Ana Pastor-Alcaraz .....	113
Anna Boqué-Ciurana.....	113
Jon Xavier Olano.....	113
<b>Crisis Terminology and Its Operational Implications in Tourism.....</b>	<b>114</b>
Rebecca Pearce.....	114
<b>ALTRI macrocellulose against the Ways to Santiago: Tourism as Community Resistance in Galicia .....</b>	<b>114</b>
Xerardo Pereiro .....	114
<b>The sound of the Quattro Province: traditional music for tourism enhancement.....</b>	<b>115</b>
Leandro Pessina .....	115
<b>Mining Value Co-creation in Hospitality: A Web Scraping Analysis of User-Generated Content .....</b>	<b>116</b>
Viet Phuong Dinh .....	116
<b>Beyond banners and bands: Procession in the (post) industrial city .....</b>	<b>116</b>
Louise Platt .....	116
<b>Tourism-Related Crime Governance in Emerging Destinations: A Critical Assessment of Security Practices and Challenges.....</b>	<b>117</b>
Getrude Poku.....	117
<b>Running with strangers: community co-creation in ultramarathon events .....</b>	<b>118</b>
Jess Porritt-Best.....	118
<b>Residents' perceptions on cross-border cultural tourism in Torne Valley .....</b>	<b>118</b>
Iida Pyykkö.....	118
Jarkko Saarinen .....	118
Lotta Haukipuro .....	118
Jutta Karjalainen .....	118
<b>Philosophy and ethics of festivals and events in 'beyond growth' contexts .....</b>	<b>119</b>
Bernadette Quinn.....	119
Willem Coetsee .....	119
<b>Neuroaesthetic Effects of Narrative Contamination on Tourist Expectations.....</b>	<b>120</b>
Matynas Radzevicius .....	120
<b>Inclusive tourism in protected areas – can accessibility and conservation coexist? .....</b>	<b>120</b>
Zoltán Raffay.....	120
<b>Making the Invisible Visible: The Place-Shaping Power of Intangible Heritage .....</b>	<b>121</b>
Ágnes Raffay-Danyi .....	121
Katalin Lőrincz.....	121
Zsófia Papp.....	121
<b>Structuristic Art as Event-Based Placemaking in Creative Tourism .....</b>	<b>122</b>
Onna Rageth.....	122
<b>Building capacity for regenerative places with tourism product design .....</b>	<b>123</b>
Sanna-Mari Renfors .....	123
Margrit Kärp .....	123
Kati Koivunen.....	123
<b>Placemaking through cultural tourism: Creating new meanings for heritage.....</b>	<b>124</b>
Greg Richards.....	124
Leontine Onderwater.....	124

<b>Modelling the EU Tourism Labour Market: Focus on Unionisation .....</b>	<b>124</b>
Blaž Rodič .....	124
Maja Turnšek .....	124
Maja Breznik .....	124
Jerneja Šavrič .....	124
<b>Money, morals and emotions: a horse tourism livelihood in China's frontier.....</b>	<b>125</b>
Heidi Rui Yang .....	125
<b>Power and Participation in Living Labs: Implications for Tourism Innovation .....</b>	<b>126</b>
Theresa Ryan.....	126
<b>(Im)mobile solidarities: case study of international volunteering in Palestine .....</b>	<b>126</b>
Marta Salvador-Almela.....	126
Neixé Castellano.....	126
<b>Participatory visual practices: case study of volunteer tourism .....</b>	<b>127</b>
Marta Salvador-Almela.....	127
Elisa Burrai.....	127
Davide Sterchele.....	127
<b>AI-Driven Solutions for DMO's: Creation and Interaction with Visitor Personas .....</b>	<b>128</b>
Jo Sanmartí Vives .....	128
Daniel Blasco .....	128
Damià Serrano.....	128
Rodolfo Baggio.....	128
<b>Passport Leisure: Rethinking Visibility in Cross-Border Voluntourism.....</b>	<b>128</b>
Sohini Sarkar.....	128
<b>Collaborative Youth Event Design in Times of Community Disruption .....</b>	<b>129</b>
Alayna Schmidt .....	129
<b>Participatory, Purposeful, Digitally Smart Governance of Intangible Heritage Tourism .....</b>	<b>130</b>
Marco Scholtz .....	130
Kaat De Ridder.....	130
<b>Overtourism as Lived Experience: Youth Voices from Dubrovnik's Old Town.....</b>	<b>130</b>
Tina Segota.....	130
Heike Schanzel .....	130
<b>Bounded Openness and Tourism System Resilience under Crisis: Evidence from China's Hainan Free Trade Port .....</b>	<b>131</b>
Xiaohua Shi.....	131
Neelu Seetaram .....	131
<b>Collaboration on AI Governance as an Urgent Need in the Tourism Industry .....</b>	<b>132</b>
Patrick Shields .....	132
Angela Wright.....	132
Breda O'Dwyer.....	132
<b>Governing GenAI Adoption in Tourism &amp; Hospitality SMEs: A Systems Perspective.....</b>	<b>133</b>
Patrick Shields .....	133
Angela Wright.....	133
Breda O'Dwyer.....	133
<b>Between Solidarity and Mobility: Navigating the Spaces, Ethics, and Constraints of Volunteer Tourism in Kizimkazi, Zanzibar .....</b>	<b>133</b>
Goretti Silva.....	133
Mariana Aragão.....	133
<b>Murals Speak: A Temporary Gallery of Place-Based Stories .....</b>	<b>134</b>
Ilja Simons.....	134
Kristel Zegers.....	134
Esther Peperkamp .....	134
<b>Participation as Event: Neighbourhood Micro-Events in Mural Co-Creation .....</b>	<b>135</b>
Ilja Simons.....	135
Kristel Zegers.....	135

<b>Gastronomic Tourism and Locavorism in Urban Destinations .....</b>	<b>136</b>
Melanie Smith .....	136
Ivett Pinke-Sziva .....	136
Orsolya Szakály .....	136
Bence Csapody .....	136
<b>Creative tourism in rural areas: development of business model in a cross-border context .....</b>	<b>136</b>
Dora Smolčić Jurdana .....	136
Elena Rudan .....	136
<b>Transforming tourism: Challenges and opportunities for Edinburgh the Festival City .....</b>	<b>137</b>
Sarah Snell.....	137
Mania Moysidou .....	137
Pavlos Arvanitis.....	137
<b>Co-Creating a Participatory Guide for Cross-Border Tourism Governance .....</b>	<b>138</b>
Vicky Steylaerts.....	138
Noëlle Verhage .....	138
<b>A model for creating collaborative village homestays: An indigenous Fijian/iTaukei case..</b>	<b>139</b>
Michael Tarrant .....	139
M. Gleason.....	139
H. Sykes.....	139
Q. Eparama.....	139
<b>Overtourism as an existential crisis: The case of Noosa Parks Association, Australia.....</b>	<b>139</b>
Michael Tarrant .....	139
Tony Wellington .....	139
M. Gleason.....	139
<b>The 'Uberisation' of work in the Brazilian hospitality sector: An Even More Precarious Form of Outsourcing?.....</b>	<b>140</b>
Angela Teberga de Paula .....	140
Cecília Ulisses Frade dos Reis .....	140
<b>Sustainable Tourism Indicators as institutional governance trust tools in systems thinking .....</b>	<b>141</b>
Conor McTiernan .....	141
Patrice Duffy.....	141
<b>Rethinking the interconnections of platformisation and workers' precarity through destination-level system thinking.....</b>	<b>142</b>
Maja Turnšek .....	142
Maja Breznik .....	142
Blaž Rodič.....	142
Jerneja Šavrič .....	142
<b>Rethinking 'travel' in the Anthropocene: modes of mobility on a damaged planet .....</b>	<b>142</b>
Rodanthi Tzanelli .....	142
<b>Does nature decide? Power dynamics and the co-creation of African safari experiences...</b>	<b>143</b>
Lisa Vebber.....	143
<b>Resistance and the Co-Creation of Tourism in Brazilian Favelas.....</b>	<b>144</b>
Bernardo de La Vega Vinolo .....	144
Rosa Codina .....	144
Fabian Frenzel .....	144
<b>Thai Influencers, Community Co-creation and Rural Destination-Making in Hokkaido .....</b>	<b>144</b>
Rujirat Vinitphol.....	144
<b>Placemaking through Arts Tourism: A Local Community Perspective .....</b>	<b>145</b>
Ives Vodanovic Lukic .....	145
<b>Urban Tourism and Festivals as Soft Power: Negotiating the Borderline between Multiculturalism and Assimilation in Kowloon City, Hong Kong .....</b>	<b>146</b>
Thanakarn Bella Vongvisitsin.....	146
Chia-Chi Chloe Yin.....	146

<b>Overcoming rural mobility challenges in times of uncontested poly crises .....</b>	<b>147</b>
Beatrice Waleghwa .....	147
<b>The Triadic Conflict: Negotiating Preservation, Tourism, and Livability in Edinburgh’s Urban WHS .....</b>	<b>147</b>
Alexandra Witte .....	147
Ellis Urquhart.....	147
Jenny Bruce .....	147
<b>Collaborative Crisis Mitigation through Upcycled Foods and Marketplace Morality in Hospitality .....</b>	<b>148</b>
Tian Ye.....	148
<b>Shame, spectacle and tourist gaze: The appeal of the "Unbeautiful" .....</b>	<b>149</b>
Konstantina Zerva .....	149

## Keynote Speakers



**Raoul Bianchi**

Raoul Bianchi is Reader in Political Economy in the Faculty of Business & Law at Manchester Metropolitan University. Following ethnographic field research on different aspects of tourism development and cultural heritage in the Canary Islands in the 1990s, over the past two decades his work pivoted towards theoretical scrutiny of the international political economy of tourism and related themes, including, dynamics of tourism and capitalism; tourism geopolitics and citizenship; tourism, work and labour relations and more recently, questions related to the political economy of crisis and postgrowth visitor economies. His primary empirical focus remains Spain, southern Europe and the wider Mediterranean region, which has led to long and fruitful collaborations with the Universities of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Barcelona, the Balearic Islands and others in the region, as well as the independent research think-tank, Alba Sud. Raoul was for several years a visiting lecturer at Wageningen University and Research and is currently an Associate Editor at Annals of Tourism Research and editorial board member of Tourism Planning and Development and the Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies. Raoul has also been closely involved in campaigns for tourism and socioecological justice and was previously a member of the executive council of former UK NGO, Tourism Concern.



### **Sandro Carnicelli**

Sandro Carnicelli is a Professor of Tourism and Leisure Studies at the University of the West of Scotland and the Deputy Director of the Centre for Culture, Sport, and Events (CCSE). Sandro is a member of ABRATUR (International Academy for the Development of Tourism Research in Brazil) and the current chair of the Renfrewshire Council Tourism Leadership Group. Previously, he was the Treasurer of the Leisure Studies Association and a member of the Executive Board of ABPCO (Association of British Professional Conference Organisers).

As a researcher, Sandro has been working in the fields of Tourism, Events, and Leisure for 20 years. Sandro has now over 50 publications between book chapters and peer-reviewed papers. Sandro has co-edited three books: *Digital Leisure Cultures* (2014); *Lifestyle Sports and Public Policy* (2014); and *Tourism Cases in Latin America* (2025). He has delivered funded projects for

organisations such as the Carnegie Trust, UK Department of Transport, the Moffat Trust, The Higher Education Academy, and the UKRI-GCRF. He currently serves on the Editorial Board of *Leisure Studies Journal*, and the *Journal of Adventure Education and Outdoor Learning*. He acts as an Associate Editor for *Event Management Journal*, and he is currently the Editor in-Chief of the *World Leisure Journal*.

### **Anna de Jong**

Anna de Jong is a Professor of Tourism and Regional Development at the University of Glasgow. Anna is an interdisciplinary social scientist, with a background in human geography, tourism management and philosophy. Her current research takes focus with tourism governance in regional areas, guided by wider concerns of resident inequalities, political capacities and participatory governance.



## Biosketches

### **Abelson, Anna**

New York University  
United States of America  
[anna.abelson@nyu.edu](mailto:anna.abelson@nyu.edu)

### **Ahmed, Naf**

Leeds Beckett University  
United Kingdom  
[n.ahmed8286@student.leedsbeckett.ac.uk](mailto:n.ahmed8286@student.leedsbeckett.ac.uk)

### **Ali-Knight, Jane**

Edinburgh Napier University  
United Kingdom  
[j.ali-knight@napier.ac.uk](mailto:j.ali-knight@napier.ac.uk)

Dr Jane Ali-Knight is a Professor in Festival and Event Management at Edinburgh Napier University and is a Visiting Professor at Curtin University and William Angliss Institute, Australia. A recognised academic, she has presented at major international and national conferences and has published widely in the areas of wine tourism and regional development; destination marketing and management; festival and event leadership, accessibility, and well-being. Jane has extensive experience in planning, designing, and delivering undergraduate, postgraduate, and professional courses and consultancy projects in tourism, festival, and event management both in the UK and overseas.

### **Alonzo, Giulia**

Università Cattolica di Milano // TrovaFestival Association  
Italy  
[giulia.alonzo@unicatt.it](mailto:giulia.alonzo@unicatt.it)

### **Angeria, Mari**

University of Oulu  
Finland  
[marvahak20@student oulu.fi](mailto:marvahak20@student oulu.fi)

### **Arcana, Komang Trisna Pratiwi**

University of Galway  
Ireland  
[k.arcana1@universityofgalway.ie](mailto:k.arcana1@universityofgalway.ie)

Komang Trisna Pratiwi Arcana is a Ph.D. student at the School of Geography, Archaeology, and Irish Study at the University of Galway, Ireland. She completed a vocational program and master's degree in Hotel Administration and Tourism Planning and Development in Bali and France. This research project is fully funded by The Ministry of Higher Education, Science, and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia for higher degree scholarship program. Her research project focuses on finding gaps and discovering relationships among rural tourism stakeholders in Bali, Indonesia's emerging tourism destination with social capital, social network analysis, and tourism resilience.

### **Ashton, Mark**

University of Surrey  
United Kingdom  
[m.ashton@surrey.ac.uk](mailto:m.ashton@surrey.ac.uk)

Mark is an award-winning educator and educational leader at the University of Surrey where

he currently holds the post of Associate Dean (Education) for the Faculty of Arts, Business and Social Sciences. Mark was recognised as the Teacher of the Year for the University at the Vice-Chancellors' Awards for Excellence in 2022 and the national CHME Annual Excellence in Learning and Teaching award for 2023. He is a Fellow of the Institute of Hospitality, a Principal Fellow of the Higher Education Authority and a member of the Executive Committee for the Council of Hospitality Management Educators (CHME).

**Audet, Sylvain**

Université du Québec à Montréal

Canada

[audet.sylvain@uqam.ca](mailto:audet.sylvain@uqam.ca)

**Avramova, Yana**

KdG University of Applied Sciences and Arts

Belgium

[yana.avramova@kdg.be](mailto:yana.avramova@kdg.be)

Yana Avramova is senior researcher at the Research Centre Public Impact, KdG (Antwerp, Belgium). Yana is currently studying the social impact of public events from a multi-stakeholder perspective (local governments, residents and visitors). In the past few years, she has also been involved in research seeking to understand and improve participation and visitor experience in the context of events, nightlife, and cultural heritage. Yana's academic background is in experimental research at the intersection of social psychology, consumer behavior and marketing communication.

**Bakas, Fiona Eva**

IGOT – University of Lisbon

Portugal

[fionabakas@edu.ulisboa.pt](mailto:fionabakas@edu.ulisboa.pt)

Fiona Eva Bakas, PhD, is a critical tourism researcher and assistant professor at IGOT (Institute of Geography and Territorial Planning), University of Lisbon, Portugal. She holds a PhD in Tourism (Otago University, NZ, 2015) with 20 years of corporate and academic experience. She completed two postdoctoral positions in Portugal: on creative tourism in rural areas (CREATOUR, University of Coimbra) and on gender in tourism labour (University of Aveiro). She is a Visiting Research Fellow at Deree, The American College of Greece. Her research interests include carnivals and festivals, creative and cultural tourism, gender in tourism labour, ethnography & feminist political economy.

**Balomenou, Nika**

Swansea University

United Kingdom

[nika.balomenou@swansea.ac.uk](mailto:nika.balomenou@swansea.ac.uk)

Nika is an Associate Professor in Tourism and Visual Sociology at the Swansea School of Management. She is co-chair of the Visual Methods in Tourism Research Special Interest Group of the Association for Tourism and Leisure Education and Research SIG. Her research interests include visual methods and the use of participant-generated images in tourism research with a special focus on host community empowerment. Nika joined Swansea University in September 2021, following 12 years at the University of Hertfordshire, where, amongst other responsibilities, she headed the Enterprise and Value Research Group and was School Research Tutor for the Hertfordshire Business School.

**Bartová, Jana**

Masaryk University, FEA

Czech Republic

[jana.bartova@econ.muni.cz](mailto:jana.bartova@econ.muni.cz)

Jana Bartová is a PhD candidate at the Faculty of Economics and Administration at Masaryk

University, specializing in transport economics and tourist decision-making. She conducts academic research, collects and analyzes data, and contributes to research outputs, while also teaching and engaging in faculty activities. She has experience organizing events and coordinating cooperation with secondary schools. Alongside her academic career, she works as a tour guide, managing trips, communication, and logistics across Europe.

**Baumgartner, Christian**

University of Applied Sciences of the Grisons  
Switzerland

[christian.baumgartner@fhgr.ch](mailto:christian.baumgartner@fhgr.ch)

Christian Baumgartner studied landscape ecology and is a professor of sustainable tourism at the University of Applied Sciences of the Grisons (Switzerland). He specializes in the development and implementation of sustainable tourism and sustainable regional development and has led specific tourism development projects in Europe, Central Asia, and Southeast Asia. He is passionate about working and researching in the field of labeling and monitoring and is an auditor and certification council member in several European certification systems. He has taught at several universities in Europe and Asia.

**Bianchi, Raoul**

Manchester Metropolitan University  
United Kingdom

[r.bianchi@mmu.ac.uk](mailto:r.bianchi@mmu.ac.uk)

**Blasco-Franch, Daniel**

University of Girona  
Spain

[dani.blasco@udg.edu](mailto:dani.blasco@udg.edu)

Dr. Dani Blasco Franch is an Associate Professor at the University of Girona. Grounded in an evolutionary and transformative vision of organizations and societies, his work focuses on understanding more-than-human complex systems through rigorous research and practical engagement. He is a Senior Research Associate at the University of Johannesburg and also serves as an external examiner at Technological University Dublin. He is also a member of international networks such as NecstOUR, PATA, the Transformational Travel Council, and the Regenerative Travel Association. Over the past two decades, he has contributed to building long-lasting research and institutional alliances across five continents.

**Botha, CR**

University of Pretoria  
South Africa

[christoffel.botha@up.ac.za](mailto:christoffel.botha@up.ac.za)

C.R. Botha is a Lecturer, Supervisor and Researcher in the Department of History, Heritage and Cultural Tourism in the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Pretoria, South Africa. In this Department he also serves as the Postgraduate Coordinator for all honours, masters and doctoral programmes in History, Heritage and Cultural Tourism as well as Museum and Interdisciplinary Studies. He teaches at both an undergraduate and postgraduate level in modules such as community-based tourism and tourism entrepreneurship, and is also involved in the work-integrated learning tourism incubator known as UP Campus Tours.

**Bowdin, Glenn**

Leeds Beckett University  
United Kingdom

[G.A.J.Bowdin@leedsbeckett.ac.uk](mailto:G.A.J.Bowdin@leedsbeckett.ac.uk)

**Burns, Peter**

Independent Tourism Policy Consultant  
United Kingdom

[professorpeterburns@gmail.com](mailto:professorpeterburns@gmail.com)

Professor Peter Burns is a tourism researcher, writer and former professor whose work draws on anthropology, sociology and critical tourism studies. His current research explores visuality, visual methods and the role of images in shaping tourism experiences, identities and destinations. Working with Dr Nika Balomenou, he is developing conceptual frameworks for understanding the place of visual culture in contemporary tourism research. His wider interests include overtourism, destination governance, heritage, narrative and the everyday practices of tourists. He remains fascinated by the intersection of theory, lived experience and the visual worlds through which tourism is increasingly understood.

**Burrai, Elisa**

Leeds Beckett University  
United Kingdom

[e.burrai@leedsbeckett.ac.uk](mailto:e.burrai@leedsbeckett.ac.uk)

Dr. Elisa Burrai is a Senior lecturer in the School of Events, Tourism and Hospitality Management at Leeds Beckett University. Elisa's research focuses on the intersection between tourism, responsibility and ethics. Her research interests include interdisciplinary approaches to international development, responsible tourism and tourism ethnographies.

**Butcher, Jim**

Canterbury Christ Church University  
United Kingdom

[jim.butcher@canterbury.ac.uk](mailto:jim.butcher@canterbury.ac.uk)

Lecturer at Canterbury Christ Church University.

**Carnicelli, Sandro**

University of the West of Scotland  
United Kingdom

[sandro.carnicelli@uws.ac.uk](mailto:sandro.carnicelli@uws.ac.uk)

**Cernigliaro, Luigi**

Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies  
Italy

[luigi.cernigliaro@santannapisa.it](mailto:luigi.cernigliaro@santannapisa.it)

Currently a PhD candidate at the Institute of Management at Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies in Pisa, Luigi researches sustainability strategies for cultural events and festivals in urban contexts. With experience spanning academia and industry, he applies a research-driven approach to advancing sustainable practices in the events sector. As a sustainability consultant, he designs, implements, and monitors environmental sustainability programmes for major festivals and large-scale live events. Additionally, he has supported the sustainability initiatives of internationally renowned touring artists during their Italian performances.

**Chaffee, Jonah**

Hotel Management School Maastricht  
Netherlands

[jonah.escondido@gmail.com](mailto:jonah.escondido@gmail.com)

I am the owner Valle Escondido Nature Reserve Hotel & Farm in Costa Rica, which is a tourist destination aimed towards raising awareness. Currently, I am attending a master's program at the School of Hotel Management in Maastricht with a focus on regenerative tourism. Professionally, I have a background in community health and hold a master's degree in community health nursing research, and was a nurse in the United States. I was

also trained as a Waldorf Kindergarten teacher and worked in a small rural school in Costa Rica before I started Valle Escondido in 2014.

**Chambwe, Michael**

North West University  
South Africa

[michaelchambwe@gmail.com](mailto:michaelchambwe@gmail.com)

Michael Chambwe holds a PhD in Economic and Management Sciences with Tourism Management from North-West University in South Africa, where he is currently a Post-Doctoral Researcher with Tourism Research in Economics, Environs and Society (TREES). His research interests lie in nature areas and their sustainability; the equitable development of communities surrounding protected areas; rural tourism livelihoods and entrepreneurship; and community-based tourism.

**Cho, Kang-Wook**

Lyon Catholic University (UCLY)  
France

[kwcho@univ-catholyon.fr](mailto:kwcho@univ-catholyon.fr)

I am currently an assistant professor of marketing, specializing in the marketing of memorable tourist destinations, at ESDES, Lyon Catholic University, France. My research focuses on the longitudinal tracking of tourists' memories over time, in order to identify the interactive relationships between the essential elements that generate long-term memories and influence tourists' future consumption.

**Cholakova, Siya**

Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski"  
Bulgaria

[siya@gea.uni-sofia.bg](mailto:siya@gea.uni-sofia.bg)

**Cole, Stroma**

University of Westminster  
United Kingdom

[Coles1@westminster.ac.uk](mailto:Coles1@westminster.ac.uk)

Dr Stroma Cole is a Professor at the University of Westminster. Stroma is a leading authority on tourism and gender relations and is co-director of the charity Equality in Tourism . Stroma has over 60 publications, and serves on the boards of ATR, JOST, and Tourism Geographies. In 2024 she won the John Rooney International Award for outstanding contribution to the field and a discipline of applied Tourism Geography. She is the principle investigator of an EU Horizon project FUTOURWORK . In 2025 she was named one of the top 50 most influential global educators of Tourism and Hospitality.

**Colombo Vilarrasa, Alba**

Universitat Oberta de Catalunya - UOC  
Spain

[acolombo@uoc.edu](mailto:acolombo@uoc.edu)

Associate professor at the Arts and Humanities Faculty of the Universitat Oberta de Catalunya . She is a researcher with expertise in social impacts, cultural festivals and identity narratives within the frame of Critical Event Studies and Cultural Studies. Her research has been focused on the critical analysis of contemporary significance of cultural events such as traditional and popular festivals, as social and cultural expressions, space of resistance and platform for cultural equality rights. In her research she observed the transformative social capacity of cultural expressions such as festivals and events, and their evolution in the framework of uncertain times. Currently she has been specialized in analysing contemporary events participation (as cultural activities) on the frame of traditional and popular culture in Spain; and on measuring event and festival impacts, from intangible

cultural and social ones to rethinking processes and methodologies to evaluate those effects.

**Correia, Alexandra**

Polytechnic Institute of Viana do Castelo  
Portugal

[acorreia@estg.ipv.pt](mailto:acorreia@estg.ipv.pt)

Alexandra Correia is an Associate Professor at the Polytechnic Institute of Viana do Castelo (IPVC) and holds a PhD in Tourism from Bournemouth University (UK). With a background in Tourism Marketing and Digital Marketing, she coordinates the Master's in Tourism and Innovation and is a member of CiTUR - the Centre for Tourism Research, Development and Innovation. As a researcher, she develops funded interdisciplinary research projects and her interests focus on tourism experiences, wine and gastronomy tourism, responsible tourism, content marketing, outdoor tourism, and soft skills.

**Cortes-Romero, Nuria**

University of Glasgow  
United Kingdom

[nuria.cortes-romero@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:nuria.cortes-romero@glasgow.ac.uk)

Nuria's academic and professional work explores tourism as a multifaceted phenomenon intersecting with cultural policy, leisure, urban regeneration, and localisation. She has extensive experience in higher education, where she has led and taught modules in Cultural and Creative Tourism, Regeneration, Business, and Leadership. She also supervises undergraduate and postgraduate dissertations, supporting students in developing rigorous research and critical analytical skills.

Her research focuses on the measurement of impacts in events and tourism, urban regeneration processes, and city transformation through a glocal development perspective. Over the past 15 years, Nuria has contributed to several international research and consultancy projects.

**Crabolu, Gloria**

University of Exeter  
United Kingdom

[g.crabolu@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:g.crabolu@exeter.ac.uk)

Gloria is a Senior Lecturer in Systems Thinking and Sustainability with an interdisciplinary profile spanning systems thinking, futures-oriented methods and policy evaluation. She has extensive experience evaluating policy and programme interventions, designing transition strategies, and applying futures thinking to reframe organisational and policy operating models under uncertainty. Her expertise has informed organisations including the UK Cabinet Office, DESNZ, the European Commission, OECD and UN Tourism, as well as regional governments, supporting strategic insight, expert review and capacity-building across policy domains.

**Cummings, Melissa**

University of Hertfordshire  
United Kingdom

[m.cummings3@herts.ac.uk](mailto:m.cummings3@herts.ac.uk)

**Dashper, Kate**

Leeds Beckett University  
United Kingdom

[k.dashper@leedsbeckett.ac.uk](mailto:k.dashper@leedsbeckett.ac.uk)

Professor Kate Dashper is Director of Postgraduate Research Degrees at the Carnegie School of Sport at Leeds Beckett University. Her research combines expertise in gender studies and human-animal studies in the contexts of events, leisure, tourism and sport.

**Dijkmans, Corné**

Breda University of Applied Sciences  
Netherlands

[Dijkmans.C@buas.nl](mailto:Dijkmans.C@buas.nl)

- Director of Research, Academy for Tourism, Breda University - The Netherlands  
- Chair of ATLAS

**Dinh, Viet Phuong**

Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne  
France

[viet-phuong.dinh@etu.univ-paris1.fr](mailto:viet-phuong.dinh@etu.univ-paris1.fr)

*Doctorat en Sciences de Gestion (IAE Paris-Sorbonne) - University of Paris 1 Panthéon Sorbonne, France - an doctoral candidate who has experience in international hospitality management. Expertise in researching sustainable management, customer behaviour, and digital branding. Over 5 years of experience in international luxury hotel industry, with academic teaching at the College of Business in University of Economics, Hochiminh City, Vietnam for more than 10 years.*

**Dlabaja, Cornelia**

University of Applied Sciences for Management & Communication  
Austria

[cornelia.dlabaja@fh-wien.ac.at](mailto:cornelia.dlabaja@fh-wien.ac.at)

Cornelia Dlabaja is a sociologist and holds a PhD in cultural studies. Since 2023, she has chaired the endowed professorship for sustainable urban and tourism development at FHWien. Since 2023, she has held the endowed chair in sustainable urban and tourism development at FHWien. Prior to this, she worked as a researcher at the Austrian Academy of Sciences (ÖAW), the University of Vienna and the Vienna University of Technology (TU Wien). Her research focuses on urban, tourism and inequality studies, as well as the sociology of space and care, and the right to the city in Vienna and Venice.

**Dogramadjieva, Elka**

Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski"  
Bulgaria

[elka@gea.uni-sofia.bg](mailto:elka@gea.uni-sofia.bg)

Elka Dogramadjieva holds a PhD in Tourism Geography from Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Bulgaria. She is currently a Full Professor in the Department of Geography of Tourism. Over the past twenty years, she has taught courses in BSc, MSc, and PhD tourism programmes at Sofia University and has authored over 100 scientific publications. Her research interests include sustainable development, management, and marketing of tourist destinations; global crises and their impact on tourism in Bulgaria; tourist experiences and innovations in urban tourism; (dissonant) heritage and tourism.

**Encinar-Prat, Laia**

CETT Barcelona School of Tourism, Hospitality and Gastronomy  
Spain

[laia.encinar@cett.cat](mailto:laia.encinar@cett.cat)

**Essen, Ayla von**

Frontiers in Sustainable Tourism  
United Kingdom

[ayla.vonessen@frontiersin.org](mailto:ayla.vonessen@frontiersin.org)

**Exelmans, Liese**

KdG University of Applied Sciences and Arts  
Belgium  
[liese.exelmans@kdg.be](mailto:liese.exelmans@kdg.be)

**Farsi, Rawan**

University of Surrey  
United Kingdom  
[rawan.farsi@gmail.com](mailto:rawan.farsi@gmail.com)

**Fitzgerald, Ann**

Munster Technological University  
Ireland  
[ann.fitzgerald@mtu.ie](mailto:ann.fitzgerald@mtu.ie)

**Formica, Clotilde**

Munster Technological University  
Ireland  
[clotilde.formica@mymtu.ie](mailto:clotilde.formica@mymtu.ie)

My name is Clotilde Formica, and I am a full-time PhD student at MTU, Ireland. My research project is fully qualitative and focuses on exploring the potential of citizen science and co-interpreted narratives to foster regenerative thinking in urban areas. I am originally from Italy, and I previously obtained a Master's degree in Tourism Destination Development from Dalarna University, Sweden. In 2025, I attended the ATLAS Annual Conference to present my master's thesis on narratives of academic mobility among Swedish early-career tourism scholars.

**Franjić, Mihaela**

University of Maribor  
Slovenia  
[mihaela.franjic1@um.si](mailto:mihaela.franjic1@um.si)

Mihaela Franjić is a researcher and teaching assistant specialising in the field of tourism, digital transformation, and data-driven education. Artificial intelligence represents the core focus of her doctoral research, which includes Airport Passenger Experience. In another research topic, the focus is on examining how students perceive and use generative AI, how they envision its future role in tourism, and how AI tools influence cognitive processes, critical thinking, and ESL writing performance. As a teaching assistant, she is responsible for courses in Data analysis, research methodology, and digital tourism; she continuously develops advanced methodological competencies.

**Frenzel, Fabian**

Trier University  
Germany  
[fabian.frenzel@uni-trier.de](mailto:fabian.frenzel@uni-trier.de)

Fabian Frenzel is Professor of Social Geography of Tourism at Trier University in Germany. His research is concerned with tourism, mobilities, organization and politics. He has worked on different dimensions of tourism and inequality, and how areas of poverty become tourist attractions. His work is also concerned with social movements and questions of social organization in more conceptual terms.

**Garrod, Brian**

Swansea University  
United Kingdom  
[Brian.garrod@swansea.ac.uk](mailto:Brian.garrod@swansea.ac.uk)

**Geißendörfer, Ronja**

Fraunhofer-Institute for Industrial Engineering IAO  
Germany

[ronja.geissendoerfer@iao.fraunhofer.de](mailto:ronja.geissendoerfer@iao.fraunhofer.de)

**Glyptou, Kyriaki**

Leeds Beckett University  
United Kingdom

[k.glyptou@leedsbeckett.ac.uk](mailto:k.glyptou@leedsbeckett.ac.uk)

Dr Kyriaki Glyptou joined the School of Events, Tourism and Hospitality as Senior Lecturer in October 2016. She is a qualified Environmental Engineer (EUR ING) from Wageningen University, Netherlands, and holds a PhD in Tourism Destination Management and Regional Development from the University of the Aegean, Greece. With international experience across sustainable development projects, research, consultancy and teaching, Kyriaki brings a dynamic, interdisciplinary perspective to tourism. She is SIG Coordinator for the ATLAS Systems Thinking in Tourism, where she explores the application of systems theory to destination resilience and crisis governance, helping reimagine how destinations adapt, respond and thrive under uncertainty.

**Gorton, Lisa**

Leeds Beckett University  
United Kingdom

[l.gorton@leedsbeckett.ac.uk](mailto:l.gorton@leedsbeckett.ac.uk)

Lisa worked for 17 years in industry before taking on her role at the university. Her experience spans small and large tourism organisations within the tour operating and retail distribution sector where she managed multi-million pound budgets and revenue streams.

**Grimes, James**

Munster Technological University  
Ireland

[James.grimes@mycit.ie](mailto:James.grimes@mycit.ie)

**Guachalla Gutierrez, Adrian**

London Metropolitan University  
United Kingdom

[a.guachalla@londonmet.ac.uk](mailto:a.guachalla@londonmet.ac.uk)

Dr Adrian Guachalla SFHEA is a Lecturer in Tourism and Creative Enterprise at London Metropolitan University's Guildhall School of Business and Law. Previous appointments include senior lecturing roles at Canterbury Christ Church University and Buckinghamshire New University. He has published research on music tourism, heritage tourism, social inclusion in tourism, sustainability in hospitality operations and student employability in travel and tourism among others. He is the co-chair and coordinator of the Heritage Tourism Education Special Interest Group at ATLAS and is also a regular speaker at conferences on tourism studies domestically and abroad.

**Hall, Jenny**

York St John University  
United Kingdom

[j.hall@yorks.j.ac.uk](mailto:j.hall@yorks.j.ac.uk)

As an Associate Professor and cultural geographer at York St John University, my interdisciplinary research centres on social and ecological justice in tourism, heritage, and sport. I specialise in intersectional inequality and policy governance, with extensive publications on mountaineering, dark skies and ecological justice. Currently, I lead a five-year conservation project with North York Moors National Park and am developing an EDI toolkit for Mountain Rescue England and Wales. As the York

Business School lead for PRME and a Fellow/Secretary of the RGS Geographies of Leisure and Tourism Research Group, I translate academic research into actionable policy and responsible management.

**Hanau, Annika**

University of Wuppertal  
Germany

[hanau@uni-wuppertal.de](mailto:hanau@uni-wuppertal.de)

Annika Hanau is a PhD researcher specialising in regional development in rural Iceland, with a focus on regenerative tourism as a framework for sustainable economic revitalisation. Her work explores how peripheral and rural communities can leverage tourism not merely as an extractive industry, but as a transformative force for ecological and social renewal. Drawing on the unique spatial and cultural context of Iceland, contributing to broader conversations on rural resilience, place-based development, and the future of tourism in fragile landscapes.

**Hansen, Marcus**

Liverpool John Moores University  
United Kingdom

[m.h.hansen@ljmu.ac.uk](mailto:m.h.hansen@ljmu.ac.uk)

**Harris, Karen**

University of Pretoria  
South Africa

[karen.harris@up.ac.za](mailto:karen.harris@up.ac.za)

Prof. Harris is an Emeritus Professor at the University of Pretoria in the Department of History, Heritage and Cultural Tourism. She holds a DLitt et Phil in History, a higher education diploma and is an accredited culture guide. She is a pioneer in the teaching of the field of heritage and cultural tourism at tertiary level in South Africa. She has also been the principal investigator in over a dozen research projects conducted for the Department of Tourism. She is the recipient of the Chancellor's Award for Teaching and Learning, the Faculty Teaching Excellence Award and Faculty Supervisors' Award.

**Hasegawa, Katsuya**

University of Greenwich  
United Kingdom

[k.hasegawa@greenwich.ac.uk](mailto:k.hasegawa@greenwich.ac.uk)

I am Katsuya, originally from Japan. I am in my fourth year as a PhD candidate in Tourism at the University of Greenwich Business School. My research interests include LGBTQ+ and tourism studies, as well as sociological research on social inequality. My current research is about how international gay male tourists experience Tokyo's gay tourist district. In terms of education, I hold a Bachelor of Laws degree in Japan and a Master's degree in Sociology from the University of Exeter. I have been teaching tourism and hospitality at the University of East London as an hourly-paid lecturer since January 2025.

**Heldt, Tobias**

Dalarna University  
Sweden

[the@du.se](mailto:the@du.se)

I am an applied tourism researcher grounded in behavioural economics. Topics for my research are e.g. mobility in rural areas; funding of recreational trails; sustainable food choices; the horse industry. I use field experiments, survey and big data, often linked to GIS and spatial planning. I am part of CeTLer-lab and the development of the MIRANDA tool, currently used in Sweden for tourism and infrastructure planning.

**Helgadóttir, Gudrun**

University of South-Eastern Norway School of Business  
Norway  
[gudrun.helgadottir@usn.no](mailto:gudrun.helgadottir@usn.no)

**Henning, Ruan**

University of Pretoria  
South Africa  
[ruankh21@gmail.com](mailto:ruankh21@gmail.com)

**Herselman, Charlene**

University of Pretoria  
South Africa  
[charlene.herselman@up.ac.za](mailto:charlene.herselman@up.ac.za)

Charlene Herselman is a lecturer in the Department of History, Heritage and Cultural Tourism at the University of Pretoria, South Africa. She completed her PhD on the impact of film tourism at heritage sites, focusing on 'Outlander' and Scotland as the main case study. Her other research interests include heritage and cultural tourism, tourist guiding, literary tourism, and popular culture tourism.

**Hjalager, Anne-Mette**

University of Southern Denmark  
Denmark  
[hjalager@sam.sdu.dk](mailto:hjalager@sam.sdu.dk)

Anne-Mette Hjalager is a professor at University of Southern Denmark. Her research interests include innovation in tourism, gastronomy, regulatory matters. The spatial manifestations of tourism, for example in rural, coastal and urban areas, constitute present areas of research.

**Horgan, Donagh**

Inholland University of Applied Sciences  
Netherlands  
[donagh.horgan@inholland.nl](mailto:donagh.horgan@inholland.nl)

Donagh Horgan is an Irish academic and practitioner in the field of socio-spatial transformation. He is a senior researcher at Inholland University of Applied Sciences and lab lead of the Urban Leisure and Tourism lab, as well as a lecturer on Master's programmes with Breda University of Applied Sciences. His work crosses various research areas and touches upon, among other things, regenerative placemaking and urban tourism; civic innovation and activation of vacant or underused spaces. His research looks at social innovation in the built environment with a focus on quality of life and urban commons.

**Humbracht, Michael**

University of Glasgow  
United Kingdom  
[michael.humbracht@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:michael.humbracht@glasgow.ac.uk)

**Jayasinghe, Anuradhi**

Griffith University  
Australia  
[anuradhi.jayasinghe@griffithuni.edu.au](mailto:anuradhi.jayasinghe@griffithuni.edu.au)

As a doctoral candidate, Anuradhi's research interests include human-wildlife coexistence, community-based conservation, and political ecology. In collaboration with the IUCN Green List, she works to integrate coexistence benefits into protected area guidelines, with a focus on Global South communities interacting with wildlife-such as Sri Lankan farmers living adjacent to national parks. Through policy analysis and ethnographic research, she aims to

advance conservation practice by illuminating the barriers communities face in achieving coexistence.

**Jepson, Allan**

University of Hertfordshire  
United Kingdom  
[a.s.jepson@herts.ac.uk](mailto:a.s.jepson@herts.ac.uk)

**Jiang, Xinyue**

Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (UAB)  
Spain  
[1697320@uab.cat](mailto:1697320@uab.cat)

Xinyue Jiang is a researcher at Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona. Her research focuses on AI, digital transformation, and SMEs in the hospitality and tourism sector. She explores the socio-technical implications of emerging technologies and their role in shaping inclusive and sustainable service ecosystems.

**Johnson, Abbie-Gayle**

University of Nottingham  
United Kingdom  
[abbie-gayle.johnson3@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:abbie-gayle.johnson3@nottingham.ac.uk)

**Jong, Anna de**

University of Glasgow  
United Kingdom  
[anna.dejong@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:anna.dejong@glasgow.ac.uk)

**Keuzenkamp, Frank**

NHL Stenden University of Applied Sciences  
Netherlands  
[frank.keuzenkamp@nhlstenden.com](mailto:frank.keuzenkamp@nhlstenden.com)

Frank Keuzenkamp is a team leader in higher professional education for Leisure & Events Management at NHL Stenden University of Applied Sciences. His work focuses on educational development, change management, team ownership and the impact of AI on education and organisations. With a background in sociology and previous experience at KPMG, he works at the intersection of behaviour, culture and organisational change. He helps teams translate ambition into concrete roles, collaboration and results. Frank is particularly interested in how professionals and students can not only adapt to change, but actively shape it in complex societal and professional contexts.

**King Fung Wong, Anthony**

The Hong Kong Polytechnic University  
Hong Kong SAR, China  
[antony-k-f.wong@polyu.edu.hk](mailto:antony-k-f.wong@polyu.edu.hk)

Prof. Antony King Fung Wong is an Assistant Professor at School of Hotel and Tourism Management, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University. His research interests include corporate social responsibility, organizational behaviour, diversity, equity and inclusion, hotel management, and medical tourism.

**Kladou, Stella**

Hellenic Mediterranean University  
Greece  
[stellakladou@hmu.gr](mailto:stellakladou@hmu.gr)

Dr. Stella Kladou is an Assistant Professor at the Hellenic Mediterranean University (HMU) in Crete, Greece. She has served as an Assistant Professor at Boğaziçi University in

Istanbul, Turkey and a Senior Lecturer at Sheffield Hallam University in the UK. She is an International Place Brand Specialist for the Place Brand Observer, co-Editor-In-Chief for Services Marketing Quarterly, Associate Editor for the Journal of Foodservice Business Research and in the editorial Board of Annals of Tourism Research and the Journal of Destination Marketing and Management. Her research mainly pertains to place branding, cultural and wine tourism, and digital marketing.

### **Koens, Ko**

Inholland University of Applied Sciences  
Netherlands

[ko.koens@inholland.nl](mailto:ko.koens@inholland.nl)

Ko Koens is a Professor of New Urban Tourism at Inholland University of Applied Sciences in Rotterdam, with over 20 years of expertise in sustainable tourism. His research focuses on urban tourism, the transition of tourism, overtourism, and tourism of inequalities (e.g. slum tourism). Ko has led multiple European research projects and currently co-chairs the SIG Urban Tourism.

### **Koivunen, Kati**

Lapland University of Applied Sciences  
Finland

[kati.koivunen@lapinamk.fi](mailto:kati.koivunen@lapinamk.fi)

Kati Koivunen is a Researcher and Principal Lecturer at Lapland University of Applied Sciences. Her work focuses on tourism, branding, and sustainable destination development, with a particular emphasis on regenerative tourism. She is interested in how place identity, stakeholder collaboration, and strategic communication can support more regenerative and responsible tourism futures. Her research explores the links between destination branding, regional development, and transformation in tourism practice and policy.

### **Konu, Henna**

University of Eastern Finland  
Finland

[henna.konu@uef.fi](mailto:henna.konu@uef.fi)

Henna Konu (D.Sc. Econ. & B.A.) is an Associate Professor at the University of Eastern Finland Business School, specializing in nature-based tourism business. Her research interests include sustainable tourism development, sustainability in tourism firms, stakeholder collaboration, and regenerative and wellbeing related dimensions of tourism. ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7886-0268>

### **Kouri, Hanna**

Aalto University  
Finland

[hanna.kouri@aalto.fi](mailto:hanna.kouri@aalto.fi)

DBA researcher in Aalto University Executive Education. I'm strategy major and do my dissertation about regenerative tourism as a strategic framework for destination development.

### **Lemos Pimenta, Ricardo**

Anglia Ruskin University  
United Kingdom

[ricardo.lemos-pimenta@aru.ac.uk](mailto:ricardo.lemos-pimenta@aru.ac.uk)

Dr Ricardo Lemos Pimenta is a Lecturer in Sustainable Business at Anglia Ruskin University (ARU). His research focuses on sustainable tourism, stakeholder engagement, and the development of sustainability indicators, with particular emphasis on aligning organisational strategies with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). His work bridges theory and practice, contributing to both academic research and real-world applications. He is committed to advancing sustainable development through education, research, and

collaboration with businesses and local stakeholders.

Open to collaboration and discussion on sustainable tourism, stakeholder engagement, and SDG-driven strategies. Interested in connecting with researchers and practitioners working on sustainable tourism, stakeholder governance, and place-based sustainability frameworks.

**Lin, Qingli**

University of Leeds  
United Kingdom  
[cnql@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:cnql@leeds.ac.uk)

**Little, Mary**

School for Field Studies  
Costa Rica  
[mlittle@fieldstudies.org](mailto:mlittle@fieldstudies.org)

I am a professor at the Center for Ecological Resilience Studies with the School for Field Studies in Costa Rica, teaching courses on justice, resilience, and ecology, as well as food security, regenerative tourism, and social research methods. As a Ph.D. candidate at the University for Peace, my current research investigates food sovereignty as a pathway to ecological justice, with a focus on the intersections of tourism, food sovereignty, and social-solidarity movements.

**Lukic, Aleksandar**

University of Zagreb  
Croatia  
[alukic@geog.pmf.hr](mailto:alukic@geog.pmf.hr)

Aleksandar Lukić is Professor at the Department of Geography, Faculty of Science, University of Zagreb. His primary research interests are rural geography and development (especially rural typologies and rural futures), rural tourism, regional and spatial planning, and participatory approaches. He currently co-chairs Commission on the Sustainability of Rural Systems of the International Geographic Union.

**MacDonald, Misty**

Leeds Beckett University  
United Kingdom / Canada  
[m.macdonald3463@student.leedsbeckett.ac.uk](mailto:m.macdonald3463@student.leedsbeckett.ac.uk)

**Macleod, Nicola**

University of Greenwich  
United Kingdom  
[n.e.macleod@greenwich.ac.uk](mailto:n.e.macleod@greenwich.ac.uk)

Dr Nicola (Nikki) MacLeod is a Principal Lecturer in Tourism Studies at the University of Greenwich. With an academic career in tourism spanning over three decades, she has extensive experience in teaching, research, programme development, and external examining in the UK and internationally. Nikki has published widely and contributes actively to research in cultural/literary tourism, routes and trails and destination management. She is Director of the Tourism Research Centre within the University of Greenwich Business School.

**Mai, Nick**

University of Leicester  
United Kingdom  
[nick.mai@leicester.ac.uk](mailto:nick.mai@leicester.ac.uk)

My research bridges criminology, sociology, and anthropology and is rooted in qualitative methodologies and long-term ethnographic engagement. It focuses on the intersections between migration, environmental degradation, and green criminology. Specifically, I am

interested in how the interplay between solastalgia, overtourism and migration affect social cohesion and amplify vulnerabilities among local and already marginalised populations. By integrating participatory filmmaking methods, I aim to document and analyse these complex dynamics in ways that resonate both within and beyond academia advocating for structural changes that align with the lived realities and needs of the communities directly concerned.

**Marlow, Robin**

Trier University

Germany

[marlow@uni-trier.de](mailto:marlow@uni-trier.de)

**Marques, Lénia**

Erasmus University Rotterdam

Netherlands

[marques@eshcc.eur.nl](mailto:marques@eshcc.eur.nl)

Lénia Marques is Assistant Professor of Cultural Management at the Erasmus University of Rotterdam, the Netherlands. Her research focuses on the development of the cultural and creative industries and their relationships with other fields, such as tourism and events. She is currently coordinator of the Cultural Tourism track of the Erasmus Mundus joint degree MAGMa, Managing Art and Cultural Heritage in Global Markets, as well as coordinator of the Master in Cultural Economics and Entrepreneurship. She serves on the boards of Kreamundo Foundation and Heritage Foundation EUR (SUHK).

**May, Ellie**

Leeds Beckett University

United Kingdom

[E.May@leedsbeckett.ac.uk](mailto:E.May@leedsbeckett.ac.uk)

**McCabe, Ben**

Dundalk Institute of Technology

Ireland

[mccabeb@dkit.ie](mailto:mccabeb@dkit.ie)

*Ben Mc Cabe is a PhD student at the Maynooth University-DKIT Regional Graduate Academy, Dundalk, County Louth, Ireland. His background is in architecture, climate change and urbanism. This research is funded under CREATE-DKIT, which is co-funded by the Government of Ireland and the European Union through the ERDF Southern, Eastern & Midland Regional Programme 2021-27. Ben Mc Cabe maintains an art practice*

<http://www.benmccabestudio.com>

**McCullers, Tynesha**

North Carolina State University

United States of America

[tmccull2@ncsu.edu](mailto:tmccull2@ncsu.edu)

*Tynesha McCullers is an Augustus M. Witherspoon Fellow and third year Ph.D. student studying Communication, Rhetoric, & Digital Media at North Carolina State University where she teaches in the departments of Communication and English. As an interdisciplinary critical scholar-educator and Black digital humanist, McCullers investigates the uses and impacts of technology, the Internet and social media platforms on Black ways of knowing, being, communicating, and remembering in the 21st century.*

**Mcleod, Glenville**

University of the West Indies

Jamaica

[glenville.mcleod@uwi.edu](mailto:glenville.mcleod@uwi.edu)

**McTiernan, Conor**

Atlantic Technological University  
Ireland

[conor.mctiernan@atu.ie](mailto:conor.mctiernan@atu.ie)

Dr Conor McTiernan (PhD) is a tourism and hospitality management lecturer in the Department of Tourism and Sport in Atlantic Technological University, Donegal. His teaching and research focus on sustainable tourism policy development, tourism networks, innovation, knowledge management and trust in tourism SMTE's. He is knowledgeable on tourism network formation and facilitating knowledge transfer within network structures. An emerging theme of interest is the use of business modelling to mitigate against crisis and disruptions in the hospitality sector.

**Miessner, Michael**

Trier University  
Germany

[miessner@uni-trier.de](mailto:miessner@uni-trier.de)

Junior professor for Economic and Tourism Geography since 2022

**Mlakar, Nadja**

University of Maribor  
Slovenia

[nadja.mlakar1@um.si](mailto:nadja.mlakar1@um.si)

**Mosedale, Jan**

University of Applied Sciences of the Grison  
Switzerland

[Jan.Mosedale@fhgr.ch](mailto:Jan.Mosedale@fhgr.ch)

*Prof. Jan Mosedale, PhD, is a foresight expert, university lecturer, co-head of research at the Institute for Tourism and Leisure, and founder of The FuturesCoach GmbH. He helps executives and organisations explore future opportunities and risks to develop resilient long-term strategies. As Director of Studies of the Master's in Tourism and Change, he bridges research and practice. His work centres on future scenarios as active tools for strategic decision-making, innovation, and transformation - developing and testing methods that help organisations stay adaptable and align with long-term trends. Through workshops, research projects, and consulting, he guides organisations in shaping change strategically.*

**Mowatt, Rasul A**

North Carolina State University  
United States of America

[rasul\\_mowatt@ncsu.edu](mailto:rasul_mowatt@ncsu.edu)

Rasul A. Mowatt, PhD - Department Head of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism Management in the College of Natural Resources and Affiliate Professor in Sociology + Anthropology at North Carolina State University. Primary areas of research: Geographies of Race, Geographies of Violence/Threat, The Animation of Public Space, and Critical Leisure Studies. Most recent publication: The City of Hip-Hop: New York City, The Bronx, and a Peace Meeting.

**Nabilah Azren, Fatin**

Leeds Beckett University  
United Kingdom

[f.azren2344@student.leedsbeckett.ac.uk](mailto:f.azren2344@student.leedsbeckett.ac.uk)

Fatin Nabilah Azren is a final-stage PhD researcher at Leeds Beckett University, UK. Her research explores Muslim women's experiences as sports spectators in Malaysia, with a focus on inclusion, identity, socio-cultural expectations, and halal-informed event environments. Using an intersectional approach, she examines how diverse social positions

shape access to and experiences of sport events. Her work contributes to debates on sport event spectatorship and halal tourism by foregrounding voices that are often overlooked. She is interested in research that supports more inclusive, equitable, and culturally responsive event and tourism practice.

**Nautiyal, Rajesh**

University of Lincoln

United Kingdom

[rnautiyal@lincoln.ac.uk](mailto:rnautiyal@lincoln.ac.uk)

Rajesh Nautiyal is a lecturer (Tourism and Events Management) at the Lincoln International Business School, University of Lincoln, United Kingdom. His primary research is within the domain of yoga tourism, folklore, and indigenous research paradigms. In addition, he is also interested in destination management, tourism product development, and intangible cultural heritage.

**North, Sally**

Goodfellow Publishers Limited

United Kingdom

[sally.north@goodfellowpublishers.com](mailto:sally.north@goodfellowpublishers.com)

Sally is Editorial Director at Goodfellow Publishers Ltd. Goodfellow Publishers are an international independent academic publisher based in Oxford UK, that specialises in the fields of tourism, hospitality, events and management.

**Ntregka, Stefania Zoi**

Hotelschool The Hague

Netherlands

[s.ntregka@hotelschool.nl](mailto:s.ntregka@hotelschool.nl)

Stefania Zoi Ntregka, Ph.D., is a Senior Lecturer in Guest Experience at Hotelschool The Hague. Her research areas include tourism governance, community empowerment, over-tourism, and destination management. She has academic and applied experience across experience in tourism and hospitality research.

**Obombo Magio, Edwin**

Leeds Beckett University

United Kingdom

[e.magio3827@student.leedsbeckett.ac.uk](mailto:e.magio3827@student.leedsbeckett.ac.uk)

**O'Hora, Kate**

TU Dublin

Ireland

[d22130122@mytudublin.ie](mailto:d22130122@mytudublin.ie)

Kate O'Hora is a third-year PhD researcher in the School of Tourism and Hospitality Management at Technological University, Dublin. Her research examines the development of food tourism in Ireland, using perspectives from evolutionary economic geography and critical juncture theory. The study explores how agency, institutional structures, local resources and socio-economic factors interact to shape food tourism development over time, especially at key moments of transition. Her work draws on qualitative methods, including interviews and document analysis, across case study areas in Ireland.

**Onderwater, Leontine**

ATLAS

Netherlands

[leontine.onderwater@atlas-euro.org](mailto:leontine.onderwater@atlas-euro.org)

**Onyeka, Paulina**

University of Derby  
United Kingdom

[p.onyeka@derby.ac.uk](mailto:p.onyeka@derby.ac.uk)

Paulina Onyeka is a Postgraduate Researcher at University of Derby with a background in human geographies. Her research interests lie at the intersection of adaptive governance and sustainable development of tourism in emerging economies.

**Osigwe, Sandra**

Sheffield Hallam University  
United Kingdom

[sandra.a.osigwe@student.shu.ac.uk](mailto:sandra.a.osigwe@student.shu.ac.uk)

**Panayiotopoulos, Aggelos**

Liverpool John Moores University  
United Kingdom

[a.panayiotopoulos@ljmu.ac.uk](mailto:a.panayiotopoulos@ljmu.ac.uk)

Dr. Aggelos Panayiotopoulos is a Senior Lecturer in International Tourism Management at Liverpool Business School, Liverpool John Moores University. He is the lead of the Tourism, Travel, Culture and Heritage Research Group, a Fellow of the Institute of Place Management, and serves as an Associate Editor of the Journal of Place Management and Development.

**Pappalepore, Ilaria**

University of Westminster  
United Kingdom

[i.pappalepore@westminster.ac.uk](mailto:i.pappalepore@westminster.ac.uk)

Ilaria Pappalepore is a Reader (Associate Professor) in Tourism and Events and Deputy Co-Director of the Destinations and Experiences Research Centre at the University of Westminster, London. With over 20 years' experience in tourism and events research, her work focuses on the links between city tourism development, mega-events, creative and cultural industries, and social and environmental justice.

**Parfitt, Claire**

CABI  
United Kingdom

[c.parfitt@cabi.org](mailto:c.parfitt@cabi.org)

**Parsons, Gemma**

Routledge - Taylor & Francis Group  
United Kingdom

[gemma.parsons@tandf.co.uk](mailto:gemma.parsons@tandf.co.uk)

Social Sciences journal Publisher from Routledge / Taylor & Francis

**Pastor Alcaraz, Ana**

University Rovira i Virgili  
Spain

[ana.pastor@urv.cat](mailto:ana.pastor@urv.cat)

**Paulino Valldeperez, Isabel**

University Rovira i Virgili  
Spain

[isabel.paulino@urv.cat](mailto:isabel.paulino@urv.cat)

Postdoctoral researcher in tourism destination management at the University of Girona and the University of Rovira & Virgili.

**Pearce, Rebecca**

Leeds Beckett University  
United Kingdom

[r.pearce2542@student.leedsbeckett.ac.uk](mailto:r.pearce2542@student.leedsbeckett.ac.uk)

*Rebecca Pearce (F.ISRM) is an Incident & Crisis Manager with over thirty years' experience in the UK travel industry. In her current position, she assumes the role of Crisis Director when the Emergency Response Team is activated, leading organisational response during major incidents, making time-critical decisions, coordinating multi-departmental teams, and briefing Board members. Alongside her professional practice, she is a doctoral researcher at Leeds Beckett University with a research interest in crisis response in the UK outbound travel sector. Rebecca regularly contributes to industry forums and working groups on crisis resilience, preparedness and operational response.*

**Pereiro, Xerardo**

UTAD - Universidade de Trás-os-Montes e Alto Douro  
Portugal

[xeradopereiro@utad.pt](mailto:xeradopereiro@utad.pt)

Xerardo Pereiro (University of Trás-os-Montes and Alto Douro - UTAD - Vila Real - Portugal. Email ) holds a European PhD in Social Anthropology from the University of Santiago de Compostela (Galicia - Spain) and another International PhD in Tourism from the University of La Laguna (Canarias - Spain). He is associated professor with habilitation (tenure) of anthropology (by ISCTE- Lisbon) and cultural tourism (by the University of Coimbra). He conducts research about tourism and cultural heritage in CRIA (Network Centre for Research in Anthropology - <https://www.cria.org.pt/pt>).

**Pessina, Leandro**

Dundalk Institute of Technology  
Ireland

[leandro.pessina@dkit.ie](mailto:leandro.pessina@dkit.ie)

Leandro Pessina is a PhD Candidate at Dundalk Institute of Technology (DkIT), Ireland, supervised by Dr Daithí Kearney (DkIT) and Dr Ioannis Tsioulakis (Queen's University Belfast - QUB). Previously funded by the Irish Research Council with a Government of Ireland Scholarship, his research examines music tourism potential in County Louth and surrounding areas. He has collaborated with Touring Club Italiano, a non-profit association dedicated to Italian heritage conservation and promotion, and has worked as teaching assistant and lecturer at IULM University and DkIT in the area of tourism management.

**Platt, Louise**

Manchester Metropolitan University  
United Kingdom

[l.platt@mmu.ac.uk](mailto:l.platt@mmu.ac.uk)

I am an interdisciplinary researcher and Reader in Place Experiences at Manchester Metropolitan University. My research focus is on placemaking and festivity with a particular focus on walking practices, processional cultures, and experiences of festivals and leisure spaces. My work predominantly draws on cultural geography, dance/performance theory, and poststructural philosophy to elucidate a more fluid understanding of place and community using festivity as a lens. I teach festival studies at both undergraduate and postgraduate level and supports PhD students on festival-related topics.

**Poku, Getrude**

Leeds Beckett University  
United Kingdom

[g.poku7945@student.leedsbeckett.ac.uk](mailto:g.poku7945@student.leedsbeckett.ac.uk)

Getrude Poku is a PhD researcher at the Carnegie School of Sport, Leeds Beckett

University. She holds a Bachelor's and an MPhil in Tourism Management from Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology and the University of Cape Coast. Her research interests include tourism crime, safety and security, consumer behaviour, entrepreneurship, and sustainability. Her doctoral research examines tourism-related crime in Ghana, developing a place-based framework to understand how crime is produced and negotiated within tourism spaces. She has published in *Tourism Management Perspectives* and is committed to advancing research that informs policy and practice in tourism safety and destination management.

**Porritt Best, Jess**

University of Westminster  
United Kingdom

[j.best@westminster.ac.uk](mailto:j.best@westminster.ac.uk)

Jess Porritt Best is a final year doctoral researcher at the University of Westminster. Her work explores ultramarathons, running events, transformational events, inclusive serious leisure, and creative methodologies. Her doctoral research focusses specifically on the role of event design and participant context in transformational experiences in ultramarathons. Jess has over a decade of operational experience in the events industry and takes an active role in the Tourism and Events teaching team at the University of Westminster.

**Pyykkö, Iida**

University of Oulu  
Finland

[iida.pyykko@oulu.fi](mailto:iida.pyykko@oulu.fi)

Iida Pyykkö is a Project Researcher at the University of Oulu and started her PhD studies in the Geography Research Unit in Spring 2026. Her research focuses on sustainable cultural tourism co-creation and the resilience of rural and remote communities. She works within the EU Horizon CROCUS project, which examines cross-border tourism sustainability and community perspectives in the Torne Valley region between Finland and Sweden. Pyykkö holds an academic background in geography, tourism, sustainable destination development, and circular economy, and her work explores the intersections of place-based tourism development in borderlands, sustainability transitions, and community resilience.

**Quinn, Bernadette**

TU Dublin  
Ireland

[bernadette.quinn@tudublin.ie](mailto:bernadette.quinn@tudublin.ie)

Bernadette Quinn, PhD, Senior Lecturer and Researcher, Technological University Dublin. Current research interests include new urban tourism and urban tourism mobilities; festivals and ethics.

**Radzevicius, Martynas**

Kaunas Kolegija Institution of Higher Education  
Lithuania

[martynas.radzevicius@go.kauko.lt](mailto:martynas.radzevicius@go.kauko.lt)

Martynas Radzevičius is a Lecturer and Researcher at Kauno kolegija Higher Education Institution (Lithuania), where he teaches and conducts research in tourism management and marketing. He is currently completing his doctoral dissertation, integrating advanced neuromarketing methodologies to investigate how visitors emotionally engage with dissonant heritage sites. His broader research interests include destination management, visitor experience design, and neuromarketing applications in tourism.

**Raffay, Zoltán**

University of Pécs

Hungary

[raffay.zoltan@kttk.pte.hu](mailto:raffay.zoltan@kttk.pte.hu)

Zoltán Raffay is associate professor at the University of Pécs, Faculty of Business and Economics, Hungary, and at Constantin the Philosopher University, Nitra, Slovakia. He has been visitor scholar in other Hungarian higher education institutions (Pannonian University), and foreign universities (Romania; Kazakhstan; Bosnia and Herzegovina). He has been the supervisor of three PhD students who have successfully defended their theses.

He is a member of several professional organizations (Hungarian Economic Society; Hungarian Geographical Society; Hungarian Regional Science Society; Association for Marketing Education and Research). His primary research fields are ecotourism, accessible tourism and angling tourism.

**Raffay-Danyi, Ágnes**

University of Pannonia

Hungary

[raffay.agnes@gtk.uni-pannon.hu](mailto:raffay.agnes@gtk.uni-pannon.hu)

Ágnes Raffay-Danyi is an associate professor in the Department of Tourism, University of Pannonia, Hungary. Her doctoral research focused on stakeholder involvement in urban tourism development, and she has been interested in destination management and sustainable development projects ever since. Her research interests also include tourism policy and planning, sustainable events, cultural tourism, visitor and attraction management. She is the programme leader of the Tourism Management MSc programme, therefore her research portfolio also incorporates curriculum management and skills development in higher education. She is the Vice-President of the Veszprém Tourism Association.

**Rageth, Onna**

University of Applied Sciences of the Grison

Switzerland

[onna.rageth@fhgr.ch](mailto:onna.rageth@fhgr.ch)

Onna Rageth holds a BA in Socio-Cultural Anthropology from the University of Zurich and an MA in Creative Events Management from Falmouth University. She is a Research Project Leader at the Institute of Tourism & Leisure at the University of Applied Sciences of the Grisons (Switzerland) and serves on the Editorial Board of the World Leisure Journal. She is also a PhD student at York St John University (UK), where her research examines Physical Non-Fungible Tokens (PNFTs) through a socio-cultural analysis of value creation, trust, and material culture within the context of Swissness and the digital-analogue economy.

**Renfors, Sanna-Mari**

Lapland University of Applied Sciences

Finland

[sanna-mari.renfors@lapinamk.fi](mailto:sanna-mari.renfors@lapinamk.fi)

**Richards, Greg**

ATLAS

Netherlands

[richardstourism@gmail.com](mailto:richardstourism@gmail.com)

Greg Richards is Professor of Leisure Studies at Tilburg University and Professor of Placemaking and Events at Breda in the Netherlands. He is currently involved in the EU Crocus Project - Cross-border cultural and creative tourism in rural and remote areas.

**Robinson, Peter**

Leeds Beckett University

United Kingdom

[peter.robinson@leedsbeckett.ac.uk](mailto:peter.robinson@leedsbeckett.ac.uk)

Peter is Head of Events, Tourism and Hospitality Management at Leeds Beckett University. Peter's expertise covers visitor attractions, transport operations, heritage, visitor experience, tourism landscapes, urban and rural regeneration and placemaking, business development and Cold War tourism. In 2021 Peter was Awarded the Victor Middleton Prize for Education and Scholarship by the Association for Tourism in Higher Education (ATHE).

He is also an award-winning author and has published both academic books and peer-reviewed journals, as well as books covering a range of transport, tourism and landscape histories. He is also a features writer for a number of publications and has appeared on several television and radio programmes discussing the travel and tourism industry. Peter has been involved with policy work with DCMS, the Department for Education, the Department for Transport and VisitBritain and has owned businesses in a breadth of industry sectors.

Peter is a Fellow of the Tourism Management Institute and the Yorkshire and Humber representative, a Fellow of the Tourism Society, a Fellow of the Institute of Travel and Tourism, and a Principal Fellow of the Higher Education Academy. He is Co-Chair of The Association for Tourism in Higher Education (ATHE), a Director of The Institute of Travel and Tourism and he represents ATHE on the Tourism Society Board. He is Chair of the Tourism Consultants Network and is also part of the ABTA Working Group on skills and qualifications. Peter is regularly invited to speak at conferences about education policy, placemaking and heritage management. He is Chair and Founding Director of The Cold War network, Chair of The Elvaston Castle and Gardens Trust, a Trustee for the 131st Derby Scouts.

**Rodič, Blaž**

University of Maribor

Slovenia

[blaz.rodic1@um.si](mailto:blaz.rodic1@um.si)

Blaž Rodič is a researcher at University of Maribor, Faculty of Tourism. He graduated from the Faculty of Electrical Engineering at the University of Ljubljana and obtained his doctorate from the Faculty of Organizational Sciences at the University of Maribor. His scientific research is focused on the development of simulation models of social and organizational systems using methodologies such as System Dynamics (SD), Discrete Event Simulation (DES), and Agent-Based Modeling (ABM), as well as the development of decision support systems using Multi-Criteria Decision Analysis (MCDA) methods.

**Rudan, Elena**

University of Rijeka

Croatia

[elenar@fthm.hr](mailto:elenar@fthm.hr)

Elena Rudan is a Full Professor at the Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management, University of Rijeka, Croatia, where she teaches courses in Entrepreneurship and Innovation, International Entrepreneurship, Entrepreneurship in Culture, Creative Industries in Tourism, and Strategic Planning and Development. Her primary scientific and professional interests include tourism, sustainable tourism development, and creative industries in tourism. She is the author of numerous scientific papers and publications and actively participates in scientific and professional projects.

**Ryan, Theresa**

TU Dublin

Ireland

[theresa.ryan@tudublin.ie](mailto:theresa.ryan@tudublin.ie)

Dr. Theresa Ryan is Senior Lecturer in Tourism & Events at the School of Hospitality Management & Tourism, TU Dublin. Her research spans tourism development, heritage, events, place-making and social inclusion. She has been involved in a number of funded research projects at national and European level. More recently, she is co-investigator on PNUT (Pathways to New Urban Tourism), a 2025-2027 project exploring how tourism reshapes urban neighbourhoods, using Dublin as a case study. PNUT adopts a Living Lab approach and is funded by ARISE, a TU Dublin initiative co-funded by the Government of Ireland and the European Union.

**Salvador Almela, Marta**

CETT Barcelona School of Tourism, Hospitality and Gastronomy

Spain

[marta.salvador@cett.cat](mailto:marta.salvador@cett.cat)

Marta Salvador Almela graduated with a master's degree in anthropology from the University of Sussex (United Kingdom). She is currently doing her PhD on volunteer tourism and social media at the University of Lleida (Spain). She is the research coordinator at the CETT, where she also works as a professor. Her lines of research focus on the analysis of tourism from an anthropological perspective.

**Sanmartí Vives, Jo**

University of Girona

Spain

[jo.sanmarti@udg.edu](mailto:jo.sanmarti@udg.edu)

**Sarkar, Sohini**

Indian Institute of Technology Roorkee

India

[sohini\\_s@hs.iitr.ac.in](mailto:sohini_s@hs.iitr.ac.in)

Sohini Sarkar is a PhD candidate in the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences at the Indian Institute of Technology Roorkee. Her research interests include Leisure Studies and Health Humanities. Her most recent publication is in the Leisure Studies journal.

**Savric, Jerneja**

University of Maribor

Slovenia

[jerneja.savric@um.si](mailto:jerneja.savric@um.si)

**Schänzel, Heike**

Auckland University of Technology

New Zealand

[heike.schanzel@aut.ac.nz](mailto:heike.schanzel@aut.ac.nz)

Heike Schänzel is a Professor in the School of Hospitality & Tourism at Auckland University of Technology in New Zealand. She is a leading scholar in critical tourism studies, recognised for her interdisciplinary research on gender, intergenerational relationships, child inclusion, and ethical fieldwork. Her work engages deeply with issues of social sustainability and social justice, informed by perspectives on childism, feminism, and masculinities in tourism. Through her scholarship, she has significantly advanced understandings of equity and the socio-cultural dimensions of tourism research and education. She is the Chief Co-Editor of Social Impact of Tourism, Frontiers in Sustainable Tourism.

**Schmidt, Alayna**

Clemson University  
United States of America  
[alaynas@clemson.edu](mailto:alaynas@clemson.edu)

Alayna Schmidt, Ph.D. (they/she) is a scholar-practitioner entangled in social justice, youth development, nature, and arts. They believe youth are powerful agents shaping their communities into places for collective thriving. Their scholarship centers youth leadership, knowledge, and imaginings for the future.

**Scholtz, Marco**

Thomas More University of Applied Sciences  
Belgium  
[marco.scholtz@thomasmore.be](mailto:marco.scholtz@thomasmore.be)

Dr Marco Scholtz is a tourism researcher at Thomas More University of Applied Sciences, specialising in travel motivation, behaviour, cultural heritage tourism, and inclusive tourism for individuals with mental impairments. He holds a Master's degree in the impact of the 2008/2009 recession on travel behaviour and a PhD in measuring tourism's social effects in a developing country. A quantitative research specialist, he has published 20 peer-reviewed articles and presented widely at conferences. Before joining Thomas More in March 2020, he was an Associate Professor at North-West University in Potchefstroom, South Africa.

**Segota, Tina**

University of Maribor  
Slovenia  
[tina.segota@um.si](mailto:tina.segota@um.si)

Her research interests include seasonality, sustainable tourism development, tourism impacts on life quality, and advertising and consumer behaviour in tourism.

**Shi, Xiaohua**

Henan Normal University  
China  
[shixiaohua@htu.edu.cn](mailto:shixiaohua@htu.edu.cn)

Dr. Shi obtained her doctorate in 2018. She once served as a visiting scholar at the University of Wisconsin. Her research interests center on agricultural economics and tourism economics. She has rich research experience, having published more than 50 academic papers in domestic and foreign journals and participated in a number of provincial, ministerial and national research projects.

**Shields, Patrick**

Munster Technological University  
Ireland  
[patrickj.shields@mymtu.ie](mailto:patrickj.shields@mymtu.ie)

Patrick commenced a PhD in Artificial Intelligence adoption at Munster Technological University (MTU) in January 2025 as part of the TU RISE Programme. MTU's TU RISE initiative is co-funded by the Government of Ireland and the European Union through the ERDF Southern, Eastern & Midland Regional Programme 2021–27. His PhD supervisors are Dr. Angela Wright, Head of the Teaching and Learning Unit at MTU, and Dr. Breda O'Dwyer, Head of Department of Organisation & Professional Development at MTU.

Patrick's research focuses on Generative AI adoption within small to medium enterprises, with a particular emphasis on independent hotels. His work examines organisational readiness, governance, risk and the human dimensions of AI adoption, bridging academic theory with applied practice.

With over 25 years of international hospitality leadership experience across Ireland, the United States, Canada and Australia, Patrick has operated at Senior Executive and General Management level within luxury and high-performance environments, including Michelin-

accredited hotel and restaurant operations. His professional background includes leading complex, people-intensive organisations through periods of transformation, innovation and technological change, while maintaining operational excellence and service quality.

**Silva, Goretti**

Polytechnic Institute of Viana do Castelo

Portugal

[goretti@estg.ipv.pt](mailto:goretti@estg.ipv.pt)

Orcid <http://orcid.org/0000-0001-6661-0555>

PhD in Tourism, scholar and researcher in Tourism at Polytechnic University of Viana do Castelo. CITUR member. Main topics of interest are sustainability and tourism development, religious, cultural and regenerative tourism. Participation at several RD&I projects, both at national and international level (e.g. ARDENT, EcoSME; CultSense; and Flsatur).

**Simons, Ilja**

Breda University of Applied Sciences

Netherlands

[simons.i@buas.nl](mailto:simons.i@buas.nl)

Ilja Simons (PhD, Tilburg University) is a senior lecturer in the Department of Leisure and Events of Breda University of Applied Sciences, the Netherlands. She has a background in sociology and qualitative research methods and is a member of the BUAS research groups Placemaking and Events, and Storytelling. Her research focuses on storytelling, narratives, identities, and communities in the contexts of tourism, heritage and cultural events. She is one of the coordinators of the ATLAS SIG Events.

**Smedt, Eva de**

KdG University of Applied Sciences and Arts

Belgium

[eva.desmedt@kdg.be](mailto:eva.desmedt@kdg.be)

Eva De Smedt holds a PhD in media and communication studies, where she applied discourse analysis and conversation analysis to explore power and identity in political television interactions. She subsequently spent seven years at Open Time - Applied Futures Research (Erasmushogeschool Brussel), conducting futures research across leisure, culture, and tourism, including work with the museum Kanal-Centre Pompidou (Brussels). In 2023, Eva joined IDEA Consult as senior research consultant, leading strategic projects for museums and touristic destinations. Since March 2026, she works as senior researcher at Public Impact (KdG University of Applied Sciences & Arts), focusing on events, festivals, cultural and heritage.

**Smith, Melanie Kay**

Budapest University of Economics and Business

Hungary

[smith.melanie@uni-bge.hu](mailto:smith.melanie@uni-bge.hu)

Dr Melanie Kay Smith is an Associate Professor, Researcher and Consultant whose work focuses on urban planning, cultural tourism, health tourism and the relationship between tourism and wellbeing. She has lectured in the UK, Hungary, Estonia, Germany, Austria and Switzerland as well as being an invited Keynote speaker in many countries worldwide. She was Chair of ATLAS for seven years and has undertaken consultancy work for UNWTO and ETC as well as regional and national projects on cultural and health tourism. She is the author of more than 120 publications.

**Smolcic Jurdana, Dora**

University of Rijeka

Croatia

[doras@fthm.hr](mailto:doras@fthm.hr)

Dora Smolčić Jurdana is a tenured professor and head of Institute of tourism and marketing at the Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management Opatija, University of Rijeka.

She has published more than 100 scientific papers and has participated in numerous conferences, thematically related to tourism. As an active researcher, she has worked on 6 scientific projects. Additionally, Dora Smolčić Jurdana has been involved as the project manager or team member in preparing more than forty professional projects and nine EU projects, transferring theoretical knowledge into practice. The most important areas of her scientific and professional interest are strategic planning in tourism, sustainable tourism development, economic and social aspects of tourism.

**Snell, Sarah**

Edinburgh Napier University

United Kingdom

[s.snell@napier.ac.uk](mailto:s.snell@napier.ac.uk)

Dr Sarah Snell has a background in Events and tourism, with a particular focus on Mega Sporting Events such as the Olympic Games. Her research looks at the way these events impact stakeholders where they are staged, particularly focusing on host communities, in relation to social and political impacts, concerns around social justice, and participative urban planning. More recently her research has looked at participative planning of event venues in the city of Edinburgh and the manner in which the city manages and plans tourism.

**Sterchele, Davide**

Leeds Beckett University

United Kingdom

[d.sterchele@leedsbeckett.ac.uk](mailto:d.sterchele@leedsbeckett.ac.uk)

Davide is joint coordinator (with Dr Elisa Burrai) of the ATLAS SIG on Volunteer Tourism, and he is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Events, Tourism and Hospitality Management at Leeds Beckett University. His research explores interaction rituals within events and tourism experiences. Past publications have focused on the inclusive/exclusive dynamics in the fields of alternative sport events, anti-racism/ multiculturalism, sport for development and transformative leisure.

**Steylaerts, Vicky**

Thomas More University of Applied Sciences

Belgium

[vicky.steylaerts@thomasmore.be](mailto:vicky.steylaerts@thomasmore.be)

I'm a senior researcher and practitioner in sustainable tourism, service and experience design, and participative innovation. I often work at the intersection of applied, visitor-centred research and project-based practice, collaborating closely with professionals, organisations and communities. My work actively translates sustainability and behavioural insights into co-creative design approaches that support tourism and heritage professionals in developing meaningful and inclusive experiences. Where relevant, I explore digital and technological elements as enablers of experience, interpretation and engagement.

**Tarrant, Michael**

University of Georgia

United States of America

[tarrant@uga.edu](mailto:tarrant@uga.edu)

Michael Tarrant is Meigs Distinguished Teaching Professor in the School of Forestry and Natural Resources at the University of Georgia, USA (since 1992) where he teaches,

conducts research, and administers their Discover Abroad program for ~350 students annually on the theme of sustainable development. He has held adjunct appointments with the University of Newcastle, NSW and La Trobe University, VIC and currently with the University of Sunshine Coast, QLD. He has published ~100 scholarly papers, delivered 150 presentations, directed research projects of several millions of dollars, and published three books, including a textbook on People, Planet and Profit.

**Taylor, Victoria**

CABI

United Kingdom

[v.taylor@cabi.org](mailto:v.taylor@cabi.org)

Assistant Editor (books), CABI

**Teberga de Paula, Angela**

University of Brasília

Brazil

[angela.teberga@gmail.com](mailto:angela.teberga@gmail.com)

Professor at the University of Brasília. PhD in Tourism and Hospitality from the University of Caxias do Sul (UCS). Master's degree in Tourism from the University of Brasília (UnB). Bachelor's degree in Tourism from the Federal University of São Carlos (UFSCar).

**Thomas, Rhodri**

Leeds Beckett University

United Kingdom

[r.thomas@leedsbeckett.ac.uk](mailto:r.thomas@leedsbeckett.ac.uk)

**Thorarensen, Helgi**

UiT - The Arctic University of Norway

Norway

[helgi.t.thorarensen@uit.no](mailto:helgi.t.thorarensen@uit.no)

Professor emeritus. PhD and MSc from Simon Fraser University in British Columbia, Canada. Post doc at Massey University, New Zealand. Was employed at Holar University, Iceland, and later at UiT - The Arctic University of Norway. Research fields, aquaculture technology, fish physiology, and fish welfare.

**Tran, Hang (Flora)**

University of Leicester

United Kingdom

[hdt2@leicester.ac.uk](mailto:hdt2@leicester.ac.uk)

I am currently pursuing a PhD at the University of Leicester, UK, where I work as a Graduate Teaching Assistant and hold Associate Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy (AFHEA). My research examines sustainability and wildlife tourism, focusing on the role of VR and AR in shaping ethical engagement and pro-environmental behaviour.

Previously, I worked as a Research Assistant at Keimyung University, South Korea, with over five years of experience in quantitative and qualitative research. I have taught undergraduate and postgraduate students on Southeast Asian business and culture, particularly Vietnam, and regularly present at academic conferences.

**Travis, Emma**

Routledge - Taylor & Francis Group

United Kingdom

[emma.travis@tandf.co.uk](mailto:emma.travis@tandf.co.uk)

Emma Travis is Senior Editor at Routledge publishers and publishes books in the areas of tourism, hospitality, events, gastronomy, and food and drink studies. She is always keen to discuss new ideas in emerging cutting-edge areas and more established fields. She

publishes in a variety of different formats to suit the varying levels of study at a global level. She welcomes proposals for research monographs, edited collections, handbooks, professional texts, and textbooks, as well as new innovative formats for educators and readers.

**Trentin, Michela**

University of Westminster  
United Kingdom

[m.trentin@westminster.ac.uk](mailto:m.trentin@westminster.ac.uk)

Michela Trentin is a Research Associate on FUTOURWORK at the University of Westminster. Her work combines first-hand experience in the tourism industry with trade union activism, explored from a feminist perspective.

**Tzanelli, Rodanthi**

University of Leeds  
United Kingdom

[r.tzanelli@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:r.tzanelli@leeds.ac.uk)

Rodanthi Tzanelli is Professor of Sociology of Culture at the University of Leeds, UK. Her work explores the intersections of cultural theory, mobilities research, and cultural globalisation, with particular emphasis on forms of travel, digital cultures, and the aesthetics of planetary futures. She is Director of the Mobilities Research Area at the Bauman Institute and Communications Coordinator for RC50 (International Tourism) of the International Sociological Association.

**Vebber, Lisa**

Pennsylvania State University  
United States of America

[llv5069@psu.edu](mailto:llv5069@psu.edu)

**Vega Vinolo, Bernardo de La**

Oxford Brookes University  
United Kingdom

[19284682@brookes.ac.uk](mailto:19284682@brookes.ac.uk)

**Veldman, Jantien**

ATLAS  
Netherlands

[jantien.veldman@atlas-euro.org](mailto:jantien.veldman@atlas-euro.org)

**Vinitphol, Rujirat**

Aoyama Gakuin University  
Japan

[rujirat@sccs.aoyama.ac.jp](mailto:rujirat@sccs.aoyama.ac.jp)

Rujirat Vinitphol is an Associate Professor at the School of Cultural and Creative Studies, Aoyama Gakuin University. She holds a Ph.D. and M.A.S. from GSII, the University of Tokyo, and a B.A. from Chulalongkorn University. Her academic research focuses on cultural studies - especially popular culture - alongside social media and tourism. Recent projects include ethnographic fieldwork on Japanese creative culture and exploring the strategic use of Thai influencers to promote non-tourist destinations in rural Japan.

**Vodanović Lukić, Ives**

Institute for Tourism  
Croatia

[ives.vodanovic@iztzg.hr](mailto:ives.vodanovic@iztzg.hr)

Ives Vodanović Lukić holds a PhD from the Department of Geography, Faculty of Science,

University of Zagreb (Croatia), with a dissertation on the role of arts-based tourism in the development of small settlements in Croatia. She previously graduated in geography, art history, comparative literature, and theology. Since 2019, she has worked at the Institute for Tourism as a Research Assistant, and since 2026 as a Research Associate, contributing to professional and scientific projects. Her research focuses on cultural, creative and arts tourism, placemaking, spirituality in tourism, and the dynamics between tourism and local communities.

**Vongvisitsin, Bella Thanakarn**

Hong Kong Metropolitan University

Hong Kong SAR, China

[btvongvi@hkmu.edu.hk](mailto:btvongvi@hkmu.edu.hk)

Dr. Bella Vongvisitsin is currently a Senior Lecturer at Lee Shau Kee School of Business and Administration, Hong Kong Metropolitan University. She received a PhD degree (Tourism Management) from School of Hotel and Tourism Management, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University. She currently serves as Social Media Editor for Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing. She has performed a leading role in international, national, and provincial research and development consultancy projects for tourism and hospitality industry. Her current research interests include community-based tourism (CBT), diversity, equity, and inclusion (DE&I), and start-up entrepreneurship.

**Witte, Alexandra**

Edinburgh Napier University

United Kingdom

[a.witte@napier.ac.uk](mailto:a.witte@napier.ac.uk)

Dr. Alexandra Witte is a Lecturer in Sustainable and Natural Area Tourism and the Deputy Lead for the Tourism Research Centre (TRC) at Edinburgh Napier University. Her scholarship sits at the intersection of cultural sociology and human geography, with a primary focus on the mobilities turn. She specialises in tourism ethnography, heritage management, the embodied practices of walking and place-making, and discourses of gender in tourism and leisure.

**Wolthuis, Erwin**

NHL Stenden University of Applied Sciences

Netherlands

[erwin.wolthuis@nhlstenden.com](mailto:erwin.wolthuis@nhlstenden.com)

Senior Lecturer Sustainable Value Creation.

**Wood, Emma**

Leeds Beckett University

United Kingdom

[e.wood@leedsbeckett.ac.uk](mailto:e.wood@leedsbeckett.ac.uk)

Emma's work on immersive, memorable experiences highlights the long lasting transformative nature of getting together at events. Her work has evidenced the wellbeing effects of memorable events and in particular how sharing memories of these leads to powerful feelings of belonging and a sense of togetherness.

**Wright, Angela**

Munster Technological University

Ireland

[angela.wright@mtu.ie](mailto:angela.wright@mtu.ie)

Dr Angela Wright, MMII Grad, MBS, PhD, MCIPD (Academic), MATLHE, D-EduLaw, Dip. Leadership, is Head of the Teaching & Learning Unit, AnSEO - The Student Engagement Office, Arts Office, at the Office of VP for Academic Affairs & Registrar.

Angela is passionate about education and the key role it plays in career pathways for

learners. As she leads the TLU, AnSEO and the Arts office, her focus is on pedagogical creativity and excellence for MTU. She uses her educational voice to encourage as many learners as possible to navigate the many pathways within higher education and to reach their potential.

**Yang, Rui (Heidi)**

Leeds Beckett University  
United Kingdom

[r.yang2386@student.leedsbeckett.ac.uk](mailto:r.yang2386@student.leedsbeckett.ac.uk)

Heidi Rui Yang is a final-year PhD student at the Carnegie School of Sport, Leeds Beckett University. She explores social inequality and China's rural-urban divide through the lens of human-horse relationships, with a particular focus on boundary-making and moral evaluation.

**Ye, Tian**

Leeds Beckett University  
United Kingdom

[t.ye@leedsbeckett.ac.uk](mailto:t.ye@leedsbeckett.ac.uk)

**Yeardley, Timothy**

Leeds Beckett University  
United Kingdom

[t.j.yeardley@leedsbeckett.ac.uk](mailto:t.j.yeardley@leedsbeckett.ac.uk)

**Zerva, Konstantina**

University of Girona  
Spain

[konstantina.zerva@udg.edu](mailto:konstantina.zerva@udg.edu)

Dr. Konstantina Zerva is an Associate Professor and Head of International Relations at the Faculty of Tourism, University of Girona. Her research explores consumer behavior in contexts of social conflict, urban tourism impacts and lifestyle migration, with a strong gender perspective. She has published widely on dark tourism, tourism-phobia and the dynamics between tourism and local communities in cities like Barcelona, Amsterdam and Los Angeles. Currently, she studies interculturality, digital nomadism and migrant women's empowerment. She coordinates the Dark Tourism sub-network of ATLAS and the Mediterranean Tourism sub-network of UNIMED.

**Zhao, Chenyue**

Sun Yat-Sen University / University of Nottingham  
China / United Kingdom

[chenyuezhao600@gmail.com](mailto:chenyuezhao600@gmail.com); [chenyue.zhao@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:chenyue.zhao@nottingham.ac.uk)

## ATLAS SIG Events Podcast Series

Leading up to the ATLAS Events SIG Pre-Meeting in Leeds, we will release a new episode every Thursday. This series emerges from a shared desire to challenge traditional frameworks and create a space for critical reflection in our field. This inaugural session is part of a collaborative podcast initiative led by the coordinators of the ATLAS Events Special Interest Groups (SIG) [Universitat Oberta de Catalunya](#) and [Leisure & Events | Breda University of Applied Sciences](#). The series aims to shift the focus away from management and economic topics toward a “critical turn” that views events and collective practices as complex phenomena entangled with power relations, identity, and social transformation.

### Episode 1:

<https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7460713066918277122/>

### Episode 2:

<https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7463269805928808450/>

All episodes can be found on SPOTIFY

<https://open.spotify.com/show/033grzKpmwgC5MR5JjvyxK>

# ATLAS 2026 Visual research in Tourism Workshop proposal



## 1. Title: Epistemic Architectures of Visual Tourism Research: Evidence, Rigour and Evaluation

Florence and Venice, June 2024

## 2. Workshop Aims and Rationale

### 2.1 The Issue

Tourism is profoundly shaped by images - from destination branding and platform circulation to protest, surveillance and digital mediation. Visual material is therefore not peripheral to tourism research; it is often central to the phenomena under investigation.

Yet visual research is sometimes regarded as methodologically softer or less credible than text-based approaches. Questions frequently arise in review and evaluation contexts:

- What constitutes valid evidence in visual research?
- How are claims grounded and justified?
- How are interpretation and analysis distinguished from impression?
- How can visual outputs be assessed against shared standards of rigour?

These are legitimate questions. They reflect the responsibility of any scholarly field to articulate clear evaluative criteria. This workshop addresses those questions directly.

### 2.2 What the workshop does

This is not a showcase of creative outputs, but a focused examination of the epistemological architecture framing current understandings of rigour in visual tourism research.

Through structured, expert-led walkthroughs, senior scholars will unpack how they:

- Frame visual research questions analytically
- Establish visual material as evidence rather than illustration
- Make interpretive moves transparent and accountable
- Anticipate and respond to ethical scrutiny

- Translate multimodal work into formats that withstand peer review

The emphasis is on disciplined reasoning, explicit decision-making and evaluative clarity.

By making expert judgement visible, the workshop aims to contribute to a more robust and defensible framework for assessing visual research - one that strengthens, rather than dilutes, visual research standards in tourism studies.

### **2.3 Why now**

Digital platforms, algorithmic circulation and AI-generated imagery are reshaping both tourism practices and research environments. As visual material becomes more pervasive and more complex, the need for clearly framed standards of analysis becomes more pressing.

If visual research is to contribute fully to tourism scholarship, its claims must be demonstrably rigorous, transparent and open to critical evaluation.

This workshop provides a space to examine how that can be achieved in practice.

### **3. Workshop Format (90 minutes)**

The workshop is designed as a tightly structured, expert-led session, focused on making the decision-making processes underpinning visual research explicit. It prioritises explanation, reflection, and synthesis over the presentation of research outputs, and is organised around three linked movements.

- i. Framing the problem (Approx. 20 minutes): Visual research as an epistemological and institutional challenge, not a technical one.
- ii. Expert Walkthroughs (Approx. 50 minutes): Three senior scholars unpack how visual research decisions were actually made in practice — including questions of evidence, ethics, representation, format and peer review.
- iii. Synthesis and forward agenda (Approx. 20 minutes): Identifying recurring patterns of judgement and articulating shared principles for rigour and evaluation in visual tourism research.

### **4. Workshop facilitators**

Dr Nika Balomenou (Swansea University) – Lead organiser  
Visuality, ethics, and the evaluation of visual research in tourism.

Prof Nick Mai (University of Leicester) – Co-organiser  
Participatory filmmaking, co-creative methods, visual ethics, mobility and resistance.

Prof Peter Burns (Academy of Social Sciences) – Contributing expert  
Pioneering scholar of visuality in UK tourism studies; perspective on legitimacy and institutional development.

Prof Brian Garrod (Swansea University) – Contributing expert  
Research quality, methodological evaluation and peer review in tourism studies.

## Tourism's Horizon: Travel for the Millions book announcement

From: <https://tourismshorizon938.substack.com/p/tourisms-horizon-travel-for-the-millions-a21>

**Tourism's Horizon: Travel for the Millions** provides a provocative, stimulating and challenging exploration of mass tourism in the context of growing global mobility, environmental challenges, and social shifts.

It is a unique publication. In early 2023 the project and blog sharing this volume's title, *Tourism's Horizon: Travel for the Millions (TH:TM)*, was established. TH:TM - working closely with [The "Good Tourism" Blog](#) - sought to question prevailing narratives around mass tourism, which often paid scant regard to the agency and humanity of tourists themselves. It also aimed to build a bridge between expert analysis and the wider public discussion of the issues, something often perceived to be lacking. Whilst contributors to this volume make diverse points from varied perspectives, they write on that shared basis.

The book is divided into two parts: a collection of in-depth interviews with leading thinkers reflecting on the evolution and future of tourism related scholarship, and a series of thought-provoking essays and think pieces adapted from the Tourism's Horizon blog (and co-published with The "Good Tourism" Blog). These pieces engage with urgent debates on sustainability, development, equality, and the ethics of travel, while also celebrating diverse and progressive aspects of mass leisure.

This volume implicitly calls for a deeper, more reflective conversation about where we're headed in the age of mass travel.

***Tourism's Horizon: Travel for the Millions*** prompts that conversation, and invites you - whether student, scholar, worker in the industry, or simply curious traveller – to join in.

### Endorsements for the book from our valued partners:

*"Tourism's Horizon: Travel for the Millions", supported by ATLAS, is a thought-provoking project that challenges and extends conventional knowledge about tourism. This publication, building on the online blog, provides a diversity of reflections on important aspects of tourism. It promotes much-needed debate on the future of tourism, addressing critical issues, from overtourism and sustainability, to tourism transportation and post-pandemic recovery, making it essential reading for anyone interested in progress in the tourism and leisure sector.*

Corné Dijkmans, Chair of ATLAS (Association of Tourism and Leisure Education and Research)

*Tourism is the focus for so many cultural and political debates these days. We – experts, writers, holidaymakers, workers in the industry – ought to address them. "Tourism's Horizon: Travel for the Millions" facilitate that with style and substance, online, and now in print.*  
David Gillbanks, publisher of TH:TM's partner, The "Good Tourism" Blog

## Abstracts

### **Leveraging Kidfluence: FReconceptualizing Child Agency within Sustainable Tourism Governance and Rights-Based Frameworks**

*Anna Abelson*  
*New York University*  
*United States*  
[anna.abelson@nyu.edu](mailto:anna.abelson@nyu.edu)

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development identifies children as essential drivers of global transformation, yet they remain systemically marginalized in tourism governance. While children are frequently the subjects of travel, their perspectives are rarely elicited in formal planning. This research addresses this gap by analyzing "kidfluence"—the active agency children exert as "co-pilots" in the tourism ecosystem.

**Methodology:** The study employs a quantitative analysis of the 2025 U.S. Family Travel Survey, a 10th-anniversary study of 1,596 parents and grandparents conducted by the Family Travel Association (FTA) and NYU SPS Jonathan M. Tisch Center. Utilizing a segmented demographic approach, the research investigates the "kidfluence" phenomenon among children aged 7–18. By analyzing data on digital inspiration sources, decision-making hierarchies, and perceived developmental outcomes, this study provides an empirical basis for understanding children as active co-creators rather than passive consumers.

**Findings:** The results reveal a paradigm shift in family travel dynamics: 74% of parents report that children are actively involved in trip planning. Leveraging digital literacy through social media and GenAI, children have become influential decision-makers regarding activities (29%), dining (23%), and destinations (15%). Furthermore, 84% of parents observed increased adaptability and 61% noted higher engagement in children who co-create their travel experiences. However, a critical inclusivity gap remains; families traveling with children with disabilities (13% of the sample) graded the industry a "C-" for accessibility, signaling a failure in child-aware design.

**Conclusion:** Adopting a "childism" framework, this study argues that "kidfluence" is a tangible expression of children as rights-holders. By synthesizing these empirical results with themes of community and collaboration, the paper explores how acknowledging child agency advances socially sustainable tourism. It advocates for a transition from adult-centric models to participatory governance that treats children's voices as essential stakeholders. These findings will serve as a catalyst for the session's workshop, aiming to bridge the gap between children's economic influence and their formal inclusion in sustainable tourism planning.

Access a copy of the 2025 Family Travel Study survey:  
<https://indd.adobe.com/view/1db5d9e0-22e3-4f05-a49a-15eb0dd08498>

### **Creative Tourism and the Politics of Avatar Concerts**

*Naf Ahmed*  
*Leeds Beckett University*  
*United Kingdom*  
[n.ahmed@leedsbeckett.ac.uk](mailto:n.ahmed@leedsbeckett.ac.uk)

Creative tourism for long has been shaped by tours, artist residencies, and long-running theatre productions. The ABBA Voyage Concert in London collapses these formats by combining the branding ideology of a tour, the spatial anchoring of artist residencies, and the

temporal durability of commercial theatre. What makes this unique beyond its attempt at crystallising formats, is the profound shift it suggests in delivering 'live'-like experiences without the physical presence of the artist but that of digitally-rendered likenesses of artists. The avatars of the pop group ABBA function as portable imagery that detach cultural meaning from the originating body and re-situate it within host destinations. The host destination London is narratively embedded into the event and the purpose-built arena functions as both site-specific anchor and modular prototype. This then assumes a franchised status of a globally recognisable intellectual property (IP), appropriated as a premium spectacle of the London theatre circuit.

The paper draws on empirical data on ABBA Voyage through an autoethnographic method, alongside secondary literature on avatar events in site-specific contexts, to trace place effects over structural disposition. It further places ABBA Voyage within the lineage of temporary cultural landmarks that tend to find permanence within place identity.

The argument develops as a trajectory. First, how IP-led residencies intensify place branding by attaching cities to recognisable cultural assets, generating visibility and tourist demand. Next, how the standardisation creates portability and conditions for inter-urban replication that may dilute differentiation and increase competitive pressure on destinations for bids. Finally, how such participation of rights-holders and specific destinations create conditions for hyper-investment in select destinations to extract uneven benefits between stakeholders. The paper exemplifies a broader shift in cultural tourism from having 'artists-in-places' towards having 'likeness-in-places,' and how this reframes placemaking debates by foregrounding IP, politics, and power relations, as destinations increasingly build cultural identity through reproducible infrastructure. By situating the ABBA Voyage case as an early-indicator to forthcoming cultural (re)production formats, this exploration delves into explicitly clarifying who controls cultural meaning, who captures tourism value by leveraging symbolic capital, and who is left behind.

## **Social Dynamics and Career Trajectories in Fringe Festivals**

*Jane Ali-Knight*  
*Edinburgh Napier University*  
*United Kingdom*  
[j.ali-knight@napier.ac.uk](mailto:j.ali-knight@napier.ac.uk)

*Lizette Oliver*  
*Kirsten Holmes*  
*David Jarman*

This study explores the social dynamics and networks shaping career development, mobility, and visibility within the fringe festival sector. Given the temporary, project-based nature of festival employment, professional ties play a critical role in accessing and sustaining productive and equitable work-based relationships. Drawing on Social Network Theory, this research employs Social Network Analysis (SNA) to examine the interpersonal structures of core operational staff at 3 Fringe Festivals - Adelaide Fringe Festival, FRINGEWORLD Perth and Edinburgh Festival Fringe. Clear insights into the working practices of large fringe festivals in Australia and Scotland reveal how staffing procedures are focused.

Complementary qualitative data were also collected through open-ended survey responses to capture lived experiences of career progression in the sector.

This paper reports on the most recent study findings from the Edinburgh Festival Fringe (EFF), the world's largest fringe festival. The 2025 Edinburgh Festival Fringe saw over 2.6 million tickets issued (2,604,404) for 3,893 shows across 301 venues. While show numbers were up, total ticket sales slightly dipped from 2024, marking a "stall" in post-Covid growth due to economic challenges and competition. Research from EFF revealed several challenges with staff (mostly female, 64%, and young people, 85% aged under 34 years)

working across multiple venues and locations and experiencing long shifts – 31% worked for 10 hours or more. Other issues include the availability and affordability of accommodation due to changes in Scottish short term let legislation. However, despite this, 90% of respondents reported that they would work at the EFF again (Edinburgh Fringe, 2018). The survey looked to explore some of these issues and was sent to 44 core staff members in December 2025.

Previous findings reveal the importance of networks in providing career opportunities and support. They show that individuals with high in-degree centrality—those frequently named as collaborators—were often regarded as holding power and influence in hiring and organisational decisions. Weak ties were frequently cited as important pathways into more sustained roles, particularly for those transitioning from casual or volunteer positions. Festivals deliver many social impacts to communities: building community cohesion, offering positive emotions and shared connections, promoting social interaction and cultural exchange and contributing to a sense of wellbeing (Yolal, M., Gursoy, D., Uysal, M., Hyelin (Lina) Kim, H., & Karacaoğlu, S., 2016). Integral to all this is the welfare and development of the staff who plan and deliver these experiences. This research provides insights into the importance of social networks to festivals and their relevance to the career progression and development of festival staff.

This study finally demonstrates the value of SNA-based methodologies in identifying structural inequalities, power relationships, informal access points, and central actors within fringe festival organisations.

## **Emotional Synchrony in Cross-Border Festival Experiences**

*Giulia Alonzo*

*Università Cattolica di Milano*

*Italy*

[giulia.alonzo@gmail.com](mailto:giulia.alonzo@gmail.com)

*Emma Wood*

[e.wood@leedsbeckett.ac.uk](mailto:e.wood@leedsbeckett.ac.uk)

In contexts where tourism destinations are increasingly shaped by crisis, uncertainty, and social fragmentation, cultural festivals often emerge as experimental spaces for collaboration, encounter, and co-creation. This presentation explores how festivals staged in border and contested regions can function as emotionally mediated arenas of social exchange, fostering forms of connection and mutual understanding under conditions of instability.

The presentation introduces an interdisciplinary conceptual framework that brings together Social Exchange Theory (SET) and the concept of Perceived Emotional Synchrony (PES). While SET offers a sociological understanding of how trust, reciprocity, and recognition develop through repeated interactions, PES captures the psychological experience of “feeling togetherness” that arises during shared collective events. The presentation argues that emotional synchrony plays a crucial enabling role in co-created festival experiences, lowering social distance and intensifying symbolic, emotional, and relational exchanges among participants.

Border festivals are discussed as liminal and creative spaces where established boundaries (social, political, and symbolic) are temporarily rendered negotiable. Within these settings, collective emotional alignment can generate short-term openings for collaboration and empathy, while also producing emotional residues that extend beyond the event itself through shared memories, narratives, and relational ties. At the same time, the presentation adopts a critical stance, recognising that emotionally charged co-creation is not inherently inclusive and remains shaped by power relations, historical narratives, and governance structures.

By reframing festivals as affective infrastructures of co-creation, the presentation contributes to current debates on creative co-created experiences in tourism and events under conditions of disruption. It offers a theoretically grounded lens for understanding how collective emotion and social exchange interact in turbulent contexts, and highlights implications for researchers and practitioners interested in designing participatory, socially sensitive, and resilient festival experiences in divided destinations.

## **Social regeneration in tourism work: perspectives from employees and managers**

*Mari Angeria*  
*University of Oulu*  
*Finland*

[marvahak20@student oulu.fi](mailto:marvahak20@student oulu.fi)

Regenerative tourism as a phenomenon goes beyond traditional sustainability discussions, emphasizing place-based approaches, reciprocity, and the role of communities in development. However, the social aspect of regeneration, especially from the perspective of the workforce, is understudied. Employees in the tourism industry enable “once-in-a-lifetime” experiences around the world, yet their overlooked role in regeneration is hindered by the precarity of the work, as employees struggle to meet basic needs, such as sufficient pay and job security.

The aim of social regeneration is to enable the long-term flourishing of both individuals and communities. From a work perspective, the concept is linked to how employees are viewed within a broader system: not as replaceable resources or utilities, but as engaged regenerative capacity. Employees’ work commitment is not based solely on financial compensation but on the meaningfulness of work and the experience of being part of a community and its regeneration. This study addresses these issues by examining how social regeneration is constructed in tourism work through the interaction between employees’ and managers’ experiences.

The research takes place in the tourism industry in Finnish Lapland, where the intensity of seasonal work, the international workforce, and extreme conditions make the dynamics of regeneration particularly visible. The research is based on an engaged scholarship position, in which the researcher has simultaneously served as an actor in a regional development project, enabling collaborative and participatory knowledge creation.

Theoretically, the study combines regenerative development thinking and capability theory. Social regeneration is understood as positive cycles that strengthen both individual agency and the community’s regenerative capacity. The data consists of two qualitative entities: first, reflections written by early-career employees on meaningful work and ethical values (n=31); and second, interviews with managers on meaningful work and responsible leadership (n=31).

The study broadens the discussion on regenerative tourism by deepening the perspective of the workforce and shows how experiences of meaningful work and responsible leadership are intertwined in the construction of social regenerative capacity or its prevention.

## **Menyama Braya and Transformative Governance: How Social Capital and Brotherhood Enable Sustainable Community-Led Tourism in Bali's Rural Destination**

*Komang Trisna Pratiwi Arcana*  
*University of Galway*  
*Ireland*  
[k.arcana1@universityofgalway.ie](mailto:k.arcana1@universityofgalway.ie)

*Thérèse Conway*  
*Maura Farrell*

The Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy of Indonesia created the Tourism Village Programme (Desa Wisata), which prioritises rural tourism development economy as post-COVID recovery strategy. It establishes 238 destinations across Bali to exemplify contemporary tourism governance approaches. The study argues that a critical distinction continue, while power asymmetries embedded in conventional interventions, frequently fail to catalyse transformative governance and failures fragment social capital. It prioritises communities in reactive resilience rather than transformative sustainability, despite the fact that villages show strong internal social capital and community solidarity through local initiatives and traditional institutions. This study examines governance complexity, funding politicisation, and policy implementation gaps as major challenges to rural tourism in Bangli and Buleleng Regencies. A qualitative study used semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions to collect data from rural tourism stakeholders. This empirical study shows that strong bonding social capital operates through embedded traditional Desa Adat, Subak (water irrigation system), Banjar (community organisation), and Pokdarwis (tourism awareness group), mutual reciprocity and participatory decision-making rooted in Tri Hita Karana philosophy undermine rural tourism resilience. However, it cannot compensate the weakness of bridging and linking social capital when governance structures fail due to persistent implementation gaps, inadequate infrastructure, limited youth participation, gender exclusion in decision making, and capacity constraints, showing that conventional programmes delivery cannot catalyse transformative governance for sustainable rural development without external support. Thus, transformative governance requires institutionalising on menyama-braya (the Balinese principles of brotherhood), solidarity, and treating all community members as kin-provides the cultural institutional foundation enabling communities to transition into proactive self-determination in collective actions and equitable benefit distribution. The study concludes that governance frameworks must recognise embedded networks and social capital as drivers of transformation, aligned with local wisdom and equitable community resilience to sustain rural tourism transformation. Sustainable tourism emerges when power shifts into local communities' needs. And without bridging and linking capital, even the strongest bonding social capital generates fragile resilience, in which communities endure but cannot thrive, adapt but cannot transform to achieve sustainable development.

## **Inclusive by Design: Investigating Hospitality Servicescape Accessibility for Neurodiverse Staff and Guests**

*Mark Ashton*  
*University of Surrey*  
*United Kingdom*  
[m.ashton@surrey.ac.uk](mailto:m.ashton@surrey.ac.uk)

*Tracy Xu*  
*Kevin Li*  
*Brana Jianu*

Despite increasing recognition of neurodiversity in workplace and societal discourse (Wen et al., 2024), limited research has examined how hospitality and service environments can meaningfully support neurodiverse customers (Jepson et al., 2024) and employees. Existing studies largely focus on broader disability inclusion (Jamin et al., 2024), with little attention to the specific sensory, social, and cognitive needs associated with neurodiverse conditions such as autism, ADHD, and dyslexia. Research on neurodivergent participation in the labour market has highlighted barriers around recruitment, workplace adjustments, and retention (Davies et al., 2023). However, the service sector, with its reliance on sensory-rich environments, emotional labour, and unpredictable service interactions, remains underexplored. This is a significant gap as the service industry is one of the world's largest employers and is characterised by high customer diversity and frequent interpersonal contact, making inclusion both a moral imperative and a business necessity (Fisk et al., 2018). Despite this, the dual perspective of both the service recipient (customer) and the service provider (employee) is rarely integrated, leaving a void in our understanding of how service design, workplace practices, and managerial strategies can engender environments that are both mutually accessible and empowering (Manning et al., 2023). This research aims to investigate how service environments can be better adapted to support neurodiverse individuals, both as customers engaging in hospitality experiences and as employees delivering them. It seeks to identify barriers and enablers to inclusion, explore best practices for neurodiversity-friendly service design, and generate evidence-based recommendations to inform more inclusive policies and practices in the service industry. Using the Delphi Method, a longitudinal qualitative analysis by which a group of experts anonymously share their opinions on a complex problem over several rounds of interactions (Linstone and Turoff, 1975), we will integrate complementary perspectives (target n=30 in the final round) from neurodiverse individuals, their parents and advocates, neurodiversity experts, academics researching in this area and relevant hospitality managers and designers with direct experience of this area. Theoretical and practical implications will be drawn and a future research agenda proposed across the dual perspectives to expand on the initial findings of this study.

### **Business Cases: Is “Entrepreneurship through Acquisition (ETA)” the only way for a community to keep its tourist attractions in operation? The case of ski areas in Canada.**

*Sylvain Audet*  
*Université du Québec à Montréal*  
*Canada*  
[audet.sylvain@uqam.ca](mailto:audet.sylvain@uqam.ca)

This business case paper presents different situations of small ski areas in Canada in which the community rallied on to save it for the benefice of the community at large, using the

“Entrepreneurship through Acquisition (ETA)” strategy and which legal structure they used to keep it open.

The unpredictable nature of seasonal tourism in Canada presents a constant challenge for owners. This is especially true for outdoor tourism activities such as golf courses, water parks, and alpine ski resorts, which have significant infrastructure.

The alpine skiing sector is dependent on weather conditions – low snowfall, periods of rain, and periods of intense cold (Da Silva et al., 2009, p. iii) .

These factors complicate the daily (and seasonal) management of these tourist attractions, maintaining and updating the costly infrastructure and push owners toward selling, closing, or declaring bankrupt of a local facility.

For the community – residents, vacationers, and visitors alike –, the ski area, and especially small ski areas, is an important component of local winter activities and sometime, year-around activities. Many local commerce depends on the present of the ski area (hotels, restaurants, gas stations, etc.) and many full time or seasonal jobs are directly or indirectly related to the ski area. -

For a community that values its ski resort, its purchase (or Entrepreneurship through Acquisition) becomes the only option when the possible closure and dismantling is a possibility.

The University of Cincinnati's / Center for Entrepreneurship define “Entrepreneurship through Acquisition (ETA) as the act of acquiring an existing business for the purpose of adding value and growth. ETA benefits include leveraging existing customer bases, brand recognition and infrastructure through new leadership, technology, resources and innovation.”

According to Cadieux et al. (2020, p. 141) and Duhamel (2024, p. 2), " Entrepreneurship through Acquisition represents an economic and social philosophy, the shared desire of a successor and an SME owner to ensure the sustainability of a viable SME through the transfer of power, leadership, knowledge, and ownership of the latter."

As it was mentioned by the University of Cincinnati's / Center for Entrepreneurship, ETA allows

entrepreneurs to bypass many early-stage hurdles. It's ideal for those seeking stability, quicker growth, and scalability.

A qualitative approach was used to prepare this analysis. It is based on face-to-face (via phone calls or video-conferencing) with actual players (actual owner or general manager) or past key players (past owner or general manager or banker). The goal of those discussions was to understand the context that brings a community together around the purchase of a ski area in three regions of Canada (New Brunswick, Québec, and British Columbia) using an “Entrepreneurship Through Acquisition (ETA)” strategy and using different legal structures (private, not-for-profit and cooperative) to achieve their goal.

Also, ski area, newspaper, and industry web sites were consulted as a first step before the interviews.

## **An Intersectional Lens on Muslim Women's Sports Spectatorship in Malaysia**

*Fatin Nabilah Azren*  
Leeds Beckett University  
United Kingdom  
[f.azren2344@student.leedsbeckett.ac.uk](mailto:f.azren2344@student.leedsbeckett.ac.uk)

*Davide Sterchele*  
[d.sterchele@leedsbeckett.ac.uk](mailto:d.sterchele@leedsbeckett.ac.uk)

*Chen Zheng*  
*Ellie May*

Creating more inclusive tourism futures requires a deeper understanding of the experiences of groups whose voices are often under-represented in tourism and leisure research. Muslim women, despite actively attending and engaging in sporting events, remain largely overlooked within sports tourism and spectatorship studies. This paper uses an intersectional lens to explore how Muslim women in Malaysia experience sports spectatorship, and how their participation is shaped by the interaction of religious identity, gender, and everyday social roles.

This research draws on qualitative interviews with Muslim women from different age groups and life stages across Malaysia. Their stories reveal that attending sporting events is not a simple or uniform experience, but one shaped by multiple considerations, including modesty, comfort, safety, and family responsibilities. Rather than being passive spectators, Muslim women actively make decisions about when, where, and how they participate, carefully balancing personal interest with religious and social expectations.

Viewing these experiences through a halal tourism perspective also highlights that inclusion is not only about providing physical access or facilities. It is equally about creating environments where individuals feel respected, comfortable, and able to be themselves without feeling judged or excluded. For many participants, the sense of belonging and emotional comfort played an important role in shaping their willingness to attend and enjoy sports events.

By centering Muslim women's lived experiences, this paper challenges common assumptions that portray them as restricted or disengaged from sports events. Instead, it shows how Muslim women actively navigate and negotiate their participation. This research contributes to inclusive tourism futures by offering a more nuanced understanding of diversity in sports spectatorship and highlighting the importance of culturally sensitive and inclusive tourism and event practices.

## **Researching children in the metaverse: Gaining access for ethnography in Roblox**

*Fiona Eva Bakas*  
University of Lisbon  
Portugal  
[fionabakas@edu.ulisboa.pt](mailto:fionabakas@edu.ulisboa.pt)

*Mario Imperioso*

Metaverse technologies have revolutionized tourism by offering immersive, interactive experiences via virtual destinations, virtual tours and gaming experiences in the metaverse. The metaverse also has a role in regenerative tourism, where virtual spaces help enhance the understanding and revaluation of places that have experienced decline in attention, popularity, or care. An illustrative example of how virtual environments, particularly through platforms like Roblox, can be integrated into cultural and touristic experiences, is the project

Salto de Arte pelo Museu Belvedere. This immersive and game-based initiative transforms iconic artworks into explorable virtual worlds, enabling users, especially children, to engage with art in an active, experiential way. As virtual environments become primary social hubs for children and adolescents, traditional research methods must evolve to address layered experiences of presence and digital identity.

This study explores the complexities of conducting ethnography in the Roblox metaverse, focusing specifically on the ethical and practical challenges of gaining access to research minors. Central to this research is the introduction of the ‘metaethnographer’—a researcher who transcends the role of a passive observer to become an active architect of the virtual environment under study. Using Roblox as a primary case study, the research investigates how digital embodiment and the researcher-designed environment influence the ability to engage with underage participants. A pilot study of 10 in-person interviews with young Roblox users highlights a critical tension: children’s favorite virtual experiences often exist in spaces they perceive as “unsafe” by traditional adult standards, complicating the ethical framework of “safe” research design.

The findings suggest that gaining access to these communities requires the metaethnographer to use a combination of techniques including leveraging virtual design skills to create ethnographic experience spaces that resonate with children’s actual digital behaviors rather than idealized safety models. By reflecting on these epistemological challenges, this research provides a grounded contribution to the field of innovative research methods to find out more about children’s tourism experiences. It offers a framework for co-creating knowledge with children in tourism and virtual environments, navigating the delicate balance between ethical gatekeeping and authentic immersion in the Roblox metaverse.

### **“F\*ing Tourists”: Sobriquets as Displaced Power Struggle in the Era of Touristification**

*Nika Balomenou*  
*Swansea University*  
*United Kingdom*  
[nika.balomenou@swansea.ac.uk](mailto:nika.balomenou@swansea.ac.uk)

*Peter Burns*  
[professorpeterburns@gmail.com](mailto:professorpeterburns@gmail.com)

In his seminal account of Palestinian merchants in Jerusalem’s Old City, Bowman (1989) describes shopkeepers muttering “fucking tourists” as a sexualised metaphor through which structural subordination within a competitive tourism economy was symbolically reversed. The phrase “f\*ing tourists” is, however, far from context-specific: it circulates across languages and destinations as a ubiquitous expression of local frustration at intentional or unintentional tourist faux pas — from crowded heritage sites to the London Underground, where commuters mutter it when visitors unknowingly block the right-hand “fast” lane on escalators. This paper moves beyond generic expletives to examine how place-specific tourist sobriquets function within local discursive economies.

Adopting an abductive approach, the paper investigates whether these locally embedded naming practices operate as a distinct yet comparable modality of displaced power negotiation. Shifting from Bowman’s (1989) embodied sexual metaphors to lexical categorisation, it analyses tourist sobriquets as everyday acts of stance-taking within extractive tourism economies. Drawing on a mixed dataset comprising netnographic discourse, questionnaires, and longitudinal ethnographic research, the analysis first examines what these sobriquets do interactionally: how they evaluate tourists, construct moral hierarchies, and reproduce positive self- and negative other-presentations. Following this preliminary analysis, and rather than treating tourist sobriquets as spontaneous prejudice or mere humour, the paper situates them within the structural ambivalence of tourism dependency. It argues that such lexical practices may function as

symbolic displacements of power asymmetry, enabling locals to reassert perceived moral or cultural superiority in contexts where economic leverage is limited. It is proposed that in an era of intensified touristification, these vernacular naming practices may illuminate how power is negotiated not only through organised protest but also through everyday linguistic acts.

## **From runways to railways: What's holding us back from greener travel**

*Jana Bartová*  
*Masaryk University, FEA*  
*Czech Republic*  
[jana.bartova@econ.muni.cz](mailto:jana.bartova@econ.muni.cz)

Tourist travel is a major contributor to the environmental impacts of tourism, making transport mode choice a critical component of sustainable tourism development (Gross and Grimm, 2018). While high-speed rail (HSR) is frequently promoted as a low-carbon alternative to short and medium-haul flights, its uptake among tourists remains limited, suggesting that behavioural barriers play an important role beyond traditional cost and time considerations.

This paper investigates how tourists choose transport modes for leisure travel and identifies individual barriers that hinder a shift towards greener travel options. The analysis is based on a discrete choice experiment (DCE) conducted in two contrasting tourism markets: the Czech Republic and mainland France. The design captures differences in tourists' experience with HSR, allowing comparison between a context where HSR use is largely hypothetical and one where it is well established. Respondents choose between high-speed rail, air travel, and bus transport for a hypothetical cross-border holiday trip of approximately 500 km within the EU. The analysis explicitly adopts a tourist-centred perspective, acknowledging that transport decisions differ across traveller profiles, life situations, and attitudes.

Choice scenarios vary in price, travel time, frequency of connections, accessibility of stations or airports, risk of delays, and comfort, including digital services such as onboard Wi-Fi. By explicitly incorporating comfort, reliability perceptions, and last-mile accessibility, factors often overlooked in tourism mobility research (Gutiérrez et al., 2019; Hergesell, 2017), the study moves beyond purely infrastructural or supply-side analyses. The inclusion of bus transport further enables identification of substitution patterns and perceived trade-offs relevant for tourist decision-making.

Data collection is field based at transport hubs and on-board trains. The results aim to inform sustainable tourism policy by identifying which transport attributes most strongly influence tourists' willingness to adopt greener travel modes, with relevance for demand-side measures supporting modal shift.

## **Regenerative Tourism – Conceptual Narrowing or Substantive Advancement?**

*Christian Baumgartner*  
*University for Applied sciences of the Grisons (Fachhochschule Graubünden)*  
*Switzerland*  
[christian.baumgartner@fhgr.ch](mailto:christian.baumgartner@fhgr.ch)

### **Background**

The term regenerative tourism has become a dominant concept in tourism scholarship and practice in recent years. This paper critically examines the extent to which regenerative approaches, though inspired by systems thinking and concepts of socio-ecological renewal,

represent a substantial advancement beyond sustainable tourism or instead a conceptual narrowing.

#### Central Argument

Sustainable tourism, as defined by the UN World Tourism Organization, is grounded in a triple-bottom-line perspective balancing ecological, sociocultural, and economic dimensions. This framework, operationalized since the 1990s and anchored in the 2030 Agenda through SDGs 8.9 and 12.b, provides an established integrative systems model. Drawing on a qualitative content analysis of academic and practitioner discourse (2020–2025), the study identifies two dominant patterns of narrowing within regenerative tourism narratives:

First: Biodiversity-focused restoration without parallel social responsibility. Ecological renewal is emphasized, while issues such as decent work, gender equality, and fair wages remain marginal. Empirical literature continues to document precarious employment and labour inequality in tourism—dimensions largely absent from regenerative frameworks.

Second: Regional value creation without fair working conditions. Although systemic interconnections between communities and ecosystems are highlighted, labour rights and safety standards are insufficiently addressed, contradicting the integrative intent of systems-based sustainability.

#### Greenwashing Risks and Scientific Critique

The lack of operational definitions and measurable indicators limits verifiability and heightens greenwashing risks. Unlike established sustainability certifications with transparent criteria, regenerative tourism often remains normatively aspirational rather than empirically grounded.

#### Implications

The paper argues for reinforcing existing sustainability frameworks through systematic integration of systems thinking rather than replacing them with an underdefined regenerative discourse. Measurable standards, balanced treatment of all sustainability pillars, and alignment with the SDGs remain central to credible tourism development.

#### Conclusion

Advancing tourism research requires combining systems-based reasoning with the empirical and normative rigour of established sustainability science to ensure conceptual coherence and implementation relevance.

### **Return of Large Predators: Multi-Stakeholder Co-Creation of Sustainable Tourism Solutions in Alpine Regions**

*Christian Baumgartner*

*University of Applied Sciences of the Grisons (Fachhochschule Graubünden)*

*Switzerland*

[christian.baumgartner@fhgr.ch](mailto:christian.baumgartner@fhgr.ch)

*Lynn Suter*

The return of wolves, bears, and lynx to the Alps—after more than a century of absence—exemplifies contemporary conflicts between land use, conservation, and tourism development. This research addresses how multi-stakeholder collaboration can transform conservation challenges into innovative, co-created tourism experiences. Based on an ongoing project conducted by the Fachhochschule Graubünden (2024–2027), this study investigates collaborative approaches to visitor management and product development

involving destination communities, agricultural sectors, conservation organizations, and tourism enterprises.

Two empirical surveys informed our analysis. The first examined visitor management strategies across 87 European protected areas and tourism organizations, revealing that 87% have implemented management measures but face critical challenges including emotional narratives surrounding predators, limited human resources, and competing stakeholder interests. The second survey documented guest demand for predator-related experiences, particularly guided thematic hikes and encounters with local farmers, demonstrating substantial willingness to pay for such offerings.

Drawing on multi-stakeholder engagement methodologies, the research develops and tests visitor management measures and communication strategies in the model regions of Arosa and Val Müstair. Collaborative product development processes integrate diverse perspectives to create authentic experiences that simultaneously address conservation objectives and community concerns. This co-creation approach bridges traditional divides between agriculture, tourism, and conservation by reframing large predators as potential economic and educational assets rather than purely as conflict catalysts.

The findings demonstrate that structured multi-stakeholder collaboration yields dual outcomes: conflict mitigation strategies grounded in local knowledge and innovative tourism products that enhance destination competitiveness. This research contributes to understanding how crisis-driven challenges—here, species recovery and associated social tensions—can be transformed through inclusive co-creation processes. The resulting insights are transferable to comparable conservation-tourism contexts across Alpine and other protected regions globally, offering practitioners evidence-based frameworks for navigating complex environmental and economic tensions in times of ecological transition.

## **Evolving Tourism Complex Systems and Resilient Responses in Small Islands Destinations (SID's)**

*Daniel Blasco*  
*University of Girona*  
*Spain*  
[dani.blasco@udg.edu](mailto:dani.blasco@udg.edu)

*Kyriaki Glyptou*  
[k.glyptou@leedsbeckett.ac.uk](mailto:k.glyptou@leedsbeckett.ac.uk)

*Rodolfo Baggio*

Tourism literature acknowledged several decades ago the importance of networks and governance for the development of the tourism industry, devoting an extensive body of research to this domain, encompassing theories, models, methods, and a wide range of tools and techniques (Baggio, 2017; Bramwell & Lane, 2011; Ruhanen, Scott, Ritchie & Tkaczynski, 2010; van der Zee & Vanneste, 2015; Volgger & Pechlaner, 2015). More recently, systems thinking emerged, offering an upgraded perspective—or a second generation—of traditional network and governance theories (Baggio, 2008, 2020; Jere Jakulin, 2017). However, the operationalization of knowledge within systems thinking has remained somewhat theoretical and abstract. In recent years, a third generation of concepts has emerged, particularly through Deleuzian Assemblage Theory (DeLanda, 2016). Yet, the second generation of systems thinking has still not been fully explored in empirical contexts. This research seeks to contribute to the empirical application of systems theory within the tourism domain. Using the case of Mauritius, a small island destination (SID) (Scheyvens & Momsen, 2008), the symptoms of complexity are analysed and discussed with key stakeholders of the destination. Among the various elements that define a complex tourism system, resilient behaviour has gained a prominent position in current debates (Hall, Prayag

& Amore, 2017). This research focuses on resilience in small island tourism systems, which have been described as particularly vulnerable contexts. The study spans a period of 20 years in order to unravel the evolutionary patterns of resilient responses within the tourism system and to examine how these interact with other attributes of complexity. It is important to acknowledge that SIDs provide a valuable laboratory that may differ from many other tourism destinations (such as cities). Nevertheless, this research represents a starting point within a broader research programme, and the findings may be scalable to other, more complex tourism destinations, thereby contributing to the development of a more holistic understanding of complex systems in tourism.

## **Posthumanist theory and tourism practice: From performance indicators to impact-in-progress**

*Daniel Blasco*  
*University of Girona*  
*Spain*  
[dani.blasco@udg.edu](mailto:dani.blasco@udg.edu)

*Jaume Guia*  
*Natàlia Ferrer-Roca*

This research reframes posthumanist theory's influence on tourism as impact-in-progress: a gradual reconditioning of practices, temporalities and institutional sensibilities rather than a set of measurable outcomes. Instead of expecting concepts to apply linearly to practice, we foreground theory–practice relays where concepts and practices co-compose one another. We draw on early work with regenerative living labs, situated industry collaborations and curriculum design to show how specific relational and temporal settings allow conceptual work to alter pacing, sequencing, attention and responsibility in situated ways. As examples, we use tourism industry networks, a new tourism master programme, and differences between Global North and Global South. Impact emerges not as discrete outputs but as the slow recomposition of tourism worlds from within. To track impact-in-progress is therefore to follow uneven temporalities, the stretches, hesitations and recalibrations through which responsibilities are redistributed and possibilities expand.

## **Redefining Success and Failure: Cost, Quality and Time in Events**

*Glenn Bowdin*  
*Leeds Beckett University*  
*United Kingdom*  
[g.a.j.bowdin@leedsbeckett.ac.uk](mailto:g.a.j.bowdin@leedsbeckett.ac.uk)

*Emma Wood*  
[e.wood@leedsbeckett.ac.uk](mailto:e.wood@leedsbeckett.ac.uk)

*Neelu Seetaram*

Cost, quality and time have been identified as key considerations in the success or failure of project and events. Sometimes referred to as the "Iron Triangle" or Triple Constraints, quality can depend on a trade-off, with only two of the three generally achievable without compromising the third. However, in the events industry, the event date and time are fixed, and reputational risk makes visible failure impractical. It is clear from the literature and ongoing discussions in the events industry that quality is no longer an aspect of management practice to be explored alongside event management, but a necessity for

success. Despite this growing emphasis, quality management remains under-researched, with limited studies examining how quality is operationalised or how its absence affects outcomes.

This study investigates how the tensions between cost, quality, and time are managed in the events industry. It draws on the findings from 15 in-depth semi-structured interviews with senior event professionals, ranging from global agencies to freelance specialists. Findings suggest that although formal Quality Management Systems (e.g., ISO 9001) are not widely adopted within the events industry, and in some cases can be dismissed as being associated with bureaucratic systems, many businesses maintain a robust internal bespoke quality management system (Bespoke QMS), such as delivery frameworks and “event bibles,” which maintain quality without the manufacturing-focused terminology. In regulated sectors such as healthcare, quality in events expands from customer or client satisfaction to compliance and risk mitigation, redefining what constitutes “success”. The research identifies overservicing (i.e. staff time to correct errors, manage scope creep, or protect client relationships, not reflected in the budget), as the main hidden cost of quality (CoQ) in events, reducing profit margins while remaining unrecorded and unrecognised as a failure cost. This paper argues that the event industry’s reliance on tacit knowledge, the often unrecognised efforts of staff and untracked internal failure costs hide the financial realities of event delivery. Redefining success and failure, therefore, requires moving beyond client satisfaction towards transparent, systematic measurement of time, cost, and quality. Applying cost of quality principles offers a management tool for more profitable growth, enhanced organisational learning, and improved professional practice.

## **Political grassroots reimagination of tourism to reclaim the rights to the place**

*Elisa Burrai*

*Leeds Beckett University*

*United Kingdom*

[e.burrai@leedsbeckett.ac.uk](mailto:e.burrai@leedsbeckett.ac.uk)

*Stefan Lazic*

*Lucia Tomassini*

Grassroots political movements are increasingly redefining tourism as a means of democratically reclaiming local rights over lands and resources that have long been exploited and depleted for tourist consumption (Milano, Novelli & Russo, 2024). This study examines the case of Sardegna chiama Sardegna (translated as Sardinia calls Sardinia), a Sardinian political movement founded in 2022. Sardinia is one of Italy’s most popular tourist destinations and one of its most socio-economically deprived regions. In acknowledging the complexities of this case-study and the geopolitical, ecological and economic challenges of the 21st century which tourism often exacerbates, we explore the potential and limitations of grassroots political movements in reimaging tourism through participatory, inclusive, and bottom-up approaches.

Theoretically, this study is informed by David Harvey’s (2015) concept of the “right to the city” and Henri Lefebvre’s (1984) notion of the production of space. The right to the city extends beyond simple access to urban resources or physical presence in space; it constitutes a collective right to shape the processes of urbanisation and spatial production. It encompasses the (collective) power to imagine, define, and recreate lived spaces according to the needs, relations, and values of communities. We extend Harvey’s and Lefebvre’s conceptualisations beyond the urban context to examine how grassroots political actors in rural and peripheral regions contest and reconfigure space in alignment with their natural environments. This perspective is particularly relevant to tourism, which is often deployed as a top-down, externally imposed, extractive economic and cultural model.

Methodologically, we adopt an exploratory, qualitative approach that combines autoethnography, open conversations, and thematic analysis, allowing space for openness, pluralism, and critical reflection on participation, rights and justice. Our preliminary findings suggest that grassroots political movements play a critical role in reimagining tourism in destinations affected by overextraction, resource imbalance, and spatial injustice. These movements empower local actors to assert political agency, influence development trajectories, and reclaim collective rights. They also stimulate rural revitalisation by diversifying local economies beyond tourism, supporting sectors such as agriculture, handicrafts, arts, and culture. Additionally, they strengthen local identity and heritage, helping to protect authenticity from commodification.

## **Volunteer Tourism in a Time of Polycrisis**

*Elisa Burrai*

*Leeds Beckett University*

*United Kingdom*

[e.burrai@leedsbeckett.ac.uk](mailto:e.burrai@leedsbeckett.ac.uk)

*Davide Sterchele*

[d.sterchele@leedsbeckett.ac.uk](mailto:d.sterchele@leedsbeckett.ac.uk)

Contemporary societies are increasingly shaped by multiple, interconnected crises affecting social, ecological, geopolitical, economic, and technological systems. Although this is not a new phenomenon, the intersecting crises of the 21st century have unique implications in a time of global interconnectedness, which requires closer scrutiny of their broader effects on societies and their specific links to tourism.

Our ongoing study aims to examine how the current polycrisis affects the configurations of volunteer tourism, a sector often positioned around notions of care, aid, and solidarity. In a previous conceptual work (Authors, anon.), we suggested that volunteer tourism mobilities may be somehow reshaped by the major geopolitical, social, and technological changes that are characterising our societies.

Given volunteer tourism's moral, educational, and humanitarian framing, we would expect it to respond to these dynamics differently to other sectors of the tourism industry, potentially leading to different causes and forms of mobilities.

To empirically investigate these conjectures, we are conducting semi-structured interviews with international volunteer tourism operators, focusing on two thematic areas: the evolution of volunteer tourism mobilities' markets (demographics, causes, motivations) and the directions of those mobilities (receiving destinations).

Preliminary findings suggest that volunteer tourism mobilities are not (at least yet) significantly shaped by broader polycrisis-related transformations. For example, some alterations in the way volunteer tourism is planned and managed include a more focused approach to skills development and educational programmes. Whilst potentially generating less unbalanced relationships with the receiving communities, these evolutions seem to be predominantly driven by commercial viability logics, rather than systemic reshaping in response to polycrisis-generated changes.

New cases of 'South-to-South' volunteer mobilities seem to emerge as possible signs of global wealth's shifting distribution, whilst at the same time being constrained by Visa-related barriers constantly reshaped by growing political instability and hardened national boundaries. Yet, although some references to crises were made by our participants, there was a tendency to consider them in isolation rather than in their interconnectedness.

Overall, our research highlights the challenges of applying the concept of polycrisis to volunteer tourism, revealing a disconnect between the sector's ethical framing and its limited engagement with overlapping, systemic crises.

## **Volunteer tourists and digital nomads: citizens of anywhere?**

*Jim Butcher*  
*Canterbury Christ Church University*  
*United*  
[jim.butcher@canterbury.ac.uk](mailto:jim.butcher@canterbury.ac.uk)

In his analysis of British society 'The Road to Somewhere', David Goodhart set out the 'somewheres' and the 'anywheres' as two tribes that shape politics. The somewheres are rooted in a community and local, bounded identity. A holiday is 'time away' from those roots: work, family and social obligation. Anywheres are mobile professionals, less rooted and more likely to adopt what are perceived to be cosmopolitan values. They have the money, and inclination, to travel. Through volunteer tourism (and arguably self consciously ethical tourism generally) they are more likely to exercise their altruistic impulses on a global stage - charity does necessarily not begin at home for them. Digital nomads, whilst quite different, share a vision of themselves as cosmopolitan, working where the fancy takes them. This paper is an exploration of the anywheres in relation to the concept of citizenship. It will provisionally argue that these forms of travel and tourism can involve an attenuated citizenship; global or cosmopolitan in form, but empty of content. All the world may be a stage for anywheres, but meaningful citizenship is linked to a nation, community and accountability.

## **Acts of Environmental Awareness as Community Resistance in Regional Theatres in Ireland**

*Ben McCabe*  
*Dundalk Institute of Technology*  
*Ireland*  
[mccabeb@dkit.ie](mailto:mccabeb@dkit.ie)

The promotion of tourism in the border area of Ireland involves the creation, promotion, and sustenance of the arts to engage tourists with local culture, tradition, and expression. Doing so can take the form of performances, exhibitions, concerts and recitals, engaging both local communities and tourists. Ireland faces climate commitments under the Paris Agreement and national climate obligations to reduce emissions by 51% over the period 2018 to 2030. Maintaining vibrant arts venues to sustain tourism and local culture whilst also reducing their environmental impact is a paradigm shift that many arts and theatre venues are facing. There is a gap in the literature on how smaller regional theatre venues are adapting to the climate crisis without the resources of larger urban venues, as an act of community resistance.

This paper will qualitatively examine how two regional arts and theatre venues in the border area, An Táin Arts Centre in Dundalk, County Louth, and Íontas Arts and Resource Centre in Castleblayney, County Monaghan, are collaborating and co-creating to reduce their environmental impact. Expected results will indicate the ecosystem of community, collaboration, and co-creation that already exists within the study arts centres, as well as the emerging use of these networks to address climate adaptation and environmental awareness.

## **From Playbour to Care: Reframing Volunteer Labour in Music Festivals through a Post-Growth Lens**

*Luigi Cernigliaro*  
*Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies*  
*Italy*  
[luigi.cernigliaro@santannapisa.it](mailto:luigi.cernigliaro@santannapisa.it)

*Giulia Alonzo*  
[giulia.alonzo@unicatt.it](mailto:giulia.alonzo@unicatt.it)

Volunteers are central to the functioning of music festivals, yet their contribution is often framed within managerial and growth-oriented paradigms that prioritise recruitment efficiency, retention strategies and legacy outputs. Although existing scholarship has extensively explored volunteer motivations, management practices and human capital legacies, it has predominantly relied on survey-based studies and focused on mega-events. As a result, the lived experience of volunteering, its biographical embeddedness, and the interplay between voluntary, paid and domestic labour remain underexplored. Moreover, limited attention has been paid to how organisational structures shape patterns of participation and to the ethical implications of recognition, evaluation and well-being. In response to these gaps, the paper is organised into two interconnected sections. The first develops a narrative review of the literature on event volunteering, mapping dominant theoretical approaches (motivational, managerial and legacy-oriented) and identifying their limitations when examined through a post-growth lens. By engaging modernisation theories of volunteering alongside critical debates on meaningful work and playbour, the review demonstrates how contemporary festival volunteering risks being subsumed within logics of flexibility, episodic engagement and event-driven territorial branding.

The second section presents qualitative findings from semi-structured interviews with festival organisers and volunteer managers. These interviews address a set of research questions concerning: (1) how voluntary, paid and domestic work are balanced and negotiated; (2) how volunteers' expectations and motivations are interpreted and managed; (3) how organisational contexts influence recognition, evaluation and long-term engagement; and (4) whether volunteering generates forms of legacy for individuals, communities and festivals. Particular attention is given to how festivals in peripheral or rural contexts position themselves between community anchoring and the pressures of eventification. Bringing these strands together, the paper advances a normative reorientation aligned with degrowth and post-growth perspectives: shifting from scaling and instrumentalisation towards an ethics of care that prioritises mental and physical well-being, reciprocity and sustainable community relations. In doing so, it positions festivals as potential laboratories of care-based organisation, where success is measured not by growth, but by dignified and sustainable participation.

## **Diffusing Opportunity: Township Residents' Readiness for Water Tourism Participation in South Africa**

*Michael Chambwe*  
*North-West University*  
*South Africa*  
[michaelchambwe@gmail.com](mailto:michaelchambwe@gmail.com)

Water tourism is widely recognised as a catalyst for local economic development, particularly in coastal and inland destinations endowed with water-based resources. In South Africa, many marginalised township communities are in close proximity to rivers, dams, and coastal environments, yet remain largely excluded from participation in water tourism and its

associated benefits. This paper explores township residents' attitudes, perceptions, and readiness to participate in water tourism using Durban, South Africa, as a case study. Guided by Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations (DOI) theory, the study conceptualises water tourism as an innovation within a developing economy context and examines how awareness, perceptions, decision-making, and adoption vary across socio-economic groups. A positivist, quantitative approach was employed, using a cross-sectional survey of 401 residents from three townships located near water bodies in the eThekweni Municipality. Statistical analyses, including independent t-tests and ANOVA, were used to examine differences across gender, age, education, income, employment status, and length of residence.

Findings reveal pronounced perceptual divides that hinder the diffusion of water tourism. Higher-income and more educated respondents perceive strong economic potential but express scepticism about local skills capacity, while lower-income and unemployed residents display confidence in community skills but are less convinced about economic benefits. Gender-based differences indicate that men are more motivated by perceived economic returns, whereas women express greater confidence in their existing business skills. Additionally, long-term residents and government employees are more aware of existing infrastructure, highlighting an "infrastructure visibility gap" rather than an absolute absence. The study demonstrates how socio-economic status, cultural beliefs, and infrastructure visibility interact across DOI stages to shape uneven adoption of water tourism. It contributes theoretically by extending DOI applications to township and developing-economy tourism contexts, and practically by highlighting the need for targeted awareness campaigns, skills development, and improved visibility of existing facilities to foster inclusive water tourism development.

### **From awareness to moral obligation: A Cross-Cultural Norm-Activation Model (NAM) Perspective in Overtourism Contexts**

*Kang Wook Cho*  
*Lyon Catholic University (UCLY)*  
*France*  
[\*kwcho@univ-catholyon.fr\*](mailto:kwcho@univ-catholyon.fr)

*Patrick Merle*  
*Sanghoon Lee*

Overtourism has emerged as a critical challenge following repeated failures in sustainable destination management, raising fundamental questions regarding tourists' moral obligation in contributing to or mitigating its negative consequences. Drawing on the Norm Activation Model (NAM), this ongoing study aims to examine how different forms of overtourism awareness activate tourists' moral obligation and how this process is shaped by individual value orientations—individualism—collectivism, self—other orientation, and selfishness—as well as by different cultural contexts in the United States, France, and South Korea. Whereas prior NAM-based research has largely conceptualized awareness of consequences as a unidimensional construct, this study adopts a multidimensional perspective on overtourism awareness. Specifically, it distinguishes between general awareness of overtourism as a societal issue, awareness of negative impacts on tourists' own experiences, and awareness of adverse consequences for host communities. This conceptual refinement is intended to provide a more nuanced understanding of the norm activation process in tourism settings.

Data collection is currently ongoing. At the present stage, 449 valid survey responses have been obtained from tourists in the United States (n = 190), France (n = 131), and South Korea (n = 126). Preliminary analyses are being conducted using PROCESS macro-based ordinary least squares regression to examine direct and moderation effects, with particular

attention to the conditional roles of individual value orientations in the awareness–moral obligation relationship.

Upon completion of data collection, additional analytical approaches, including multi-group structural equation modeling, will be employed to further validate the proposed relationships and to examine cross-national differences in greater depth. The full set of empirical findings, including detailed moderation and cross-cultural structural comparisons, will be presented in the full abstract and subsequent manuscript submission.

By clarifying the research design, data status, and planned analytical strategy, this study seeks to contribute to the extension of the Norm Activation Model in tourism contexts and to offer a theoretically grounded basis for understanding tourists' moral responsibility in overtourism situations.

### **Knowing the hikers - the case of Rila NP, Bulgaria**

*Siya Cholakova*

*Sofia University 'St. Kliment Ohridski'*

*Bulgaria*

[siya@gea.uni-sofia.bg](mailto:siya@gea.uni-sofia.bg)

The growing interest in nature tourism and recreational activities in protected areas poses serious challenges to their management. The increase in the number of visitors, the variety of activities and the increased "sportification" of tourism lead to both economic and social benefits to local communities, but also to significant environmental and social risks. In some mountain areas signs of overtourism are already observed. In this context, tourist monitoring is a key tool for sustainable management of parks and protected areas. Based on a systematic literature review of traditional and modern methods for monitoring of tourists in protected areas, an analysis of their advantages, limitations and applicability is presented. The mass adoption of social media, as well as the development of online travel communities, allow easier research of the target population, as opposed to traditional resource-intensive monitoring methods. To test this method, an exploratory study was carried out in the form of an online survey of visitors to Urdini Lakes in Rila National Park, Bulgaria. The results are then compared with the scarce official data. The analysis demonstrates the pros and cons of both sources and proposes the types of valuable information that can be extracted by combining quantitative and qualitative data from different monitoring sources. Further research should adopt an interdisciplinary approach and methodologies, tailored to the specific characteristics of each protected area, in order to balance nature conservation and the development of sustainable tourism.

### **Tourism development and spatial justice in Tenerife**

*Nuria Cortes-Romero*

*University of Glasgow*

*United Kingdom*

[nuria.cortes-romero@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:nuria.cortes-romero@glasgow.ac.uk)

*Cristina Figueroa Domecq*

*Anna de Jong*

[anna.dejong@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:anna.dejong@glasgow.ac.uk)

Developed within the framework of the JUST TOUR research project, this paper examines Tenerife as a critical case for analysing shifting power relations, participation, and governance in contexts of advanced tourism development. As one of Spain's most

emblematic mass tourism destinations, Tenerife provides a paradigmatic example of tourism expansion and touristification, understood as the intensification and spatial diffusion of tourism-related functions into everyday life and housing markets.

Drawing on debates in critical tourism studies, political economy, and urban political ecology, the paper conceptualises current transformations as the outcome of growth-oriented tourism governance regimes operating across multiple scales. The island is experiencing multi-level tensions driven by sustained increases in visitor arrivals, the expansion of expatriate residential mobility, and externally financed real estate and hospitality investment. These dynamics have intensified pressures on land use, housing affordability, infrastructure, and ecological resources, while reinforcing asymmetries in decision-making power between public authorities, private investors, and local communities.

Recent large-scale demonstrations across the island signal the emergence of new forms of contestation around tourism-led development. At the municipal level, urban and hotel projects are increasingly framed by residents as threats to ecological sustainability, social cohesion, and cultural integrity. These conflicts reveal competing imaginaries of development and divergent claims to territorial justice.

Methodologically, the study adopts a qualitative design grounded in 35 semi-structured interviews with residents, policymakers, and tourism industry stakeholders. Through a multi-level (regional and municipal) and multi-actor governance lens, the analysis examines how tourism conflicts reshape participation mechanisms, policy agendas, and institutional arrangements. By situating Tenerife within broader debates on post-growth tourism and just transitions, the paper contributes to understanding how mature mass tourism destinations negotiate legitimacy, redistribution, and sustainability in contexts of intensifying socio-environmental pressure.

## **Complexity-aware design: tackling tourism complexity through systems practice**

*Gloria Crabolu*  
*University of Exeter*  
*United Kingdom*  
[g.crabolu@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:g.crabolu@exeter.ac.uk)

As tourism destinations grapple with climate change, socio-ecological degradation, overtourism, and uneven development, policymakers are increasingly compelled to intervene in systems characterised by interdependence, uncertainty, and contested values. This research note posits systems thinking as a practical governance approach for tourism policymaking, demonstrating how complexity-aware methods can transform the perception, coordination, and implementation of policy challenges.

Drawing on experience from supranational and destination-level policy processes this paper illustrates how systems thinking has been operationalised in different case studies, through causal loop diagrams, co-creation workshops, futures-oriented scenarios, and iterative learning processes. These approaches transcend linear planning models by rendering feedback loops transparent, exposing cross-sectoral interdependencies, and facilitating collective reflection among public, private, and community actors.

Rather than perceiving tourism challenges as isolated sectoral issues, a systems perspective reframes them as dynamic socio-technical configurations necessitating adaptive governance. The paper demonstrates how systems-informed policymaking can enhance strategic alignment, improve policy coherence, and support the design of interventions capable of facilitating systemic change. In doing so, it contributes to an emerging evidence base on how systems thinking can function not only as an analytical lens but also as a practical mechanism for coordination and transformation in tourism governance.

## **Destination marketing organisations: envisioning a regenerative tourism operating model**

*Gloria Crabolu*  
*University of Exeter*  
*United Kingdom*  
[g.crabolu@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:g.crabolu@exeter.ac.uk)

*Anna Torres-Delgado*  
*Alector Manuel Ribeiro*

This study critically examines the role of Destination marketing organisations (DMOs) in the transition towards regenerative tourism, challenging conventional operating models primarily centred on promotion and economic growth. Building on emerging tourism transition literature, this study adopts a participatory foresight approach combining participatory normative scenario-building with the Three-Horizons framework. Two structured workshops were conducted with 26 DMO managers from multiple destinations across Europe. The first workshop focused on exploring the current operating model of DMOs. Participants collectively mapped existing activities and responsibilities, identifying dominant practices and underlying assumptions shaping destination governance. The second workshop examined possible transition pathways towards regenerative tourism. Using the Three Horizons framework, participants discussed elements of the current tourism system that should be retained, practices that may hinder systemic change, and emerging innovations that could enable more regenerative approaches to destination management.

The findings suggest that transitioning towards regenerative tourism requires a significant reconfiguration of DMO operating model. While traditional functions such as destination promotion remain central to many organisations, participants highlighted an increasing need for DMOs to adopt broader roles related to stewardship, destination management, and forms of regenerative marketing. Rather than presenting regenerative marketing as a clearly defined or universally accepted concept, the study reveals it as a contested and evolving notion within DMO practice. Participants used the term to describe a potential reorientation of marketing away from volume-driven promotion towards communication strategies that shape visitor behaviour, emphasise place-based values, and support socio-ecological regeneration. At the same time, participants identified substantial challenges in adopting regenerative approaches. These included institutional inertia within tourism governance structures, limited authority of DMOs over wider destination systems, resource constraints, and tensions between growth-oriented performance metrics and regenerative ambitions. Additionally, participants noted difficulties in aligning multiple stakeholders around long-term systemic goals in destinations where tourism development has historically prioritised economic expansion.

Theoretically, this study contributes to advancing the understanding of regenerative tourism governance by clarifying how DMOs can reposition their operating models within broader socio-ecological systems. Methodologically, it provides a replicable and adaptable tool for participatory foresight in tourism governance. It contributes a manifesto offering actionable pathways to guide policymakers and DMOs in transitioning towards regenerative tourism futures.

## **The duality of Ainu visual representation: colonial spectacle and contemporary absence**

*Melissa Cummings*  
*University of Hertfordshire*  
*United Kingdom*  
[mellimoo@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:mellimoo@hotmail.co.uk)

This visual installation presents fieldwork images produced during ethnographic observation in Hokkaido, Japan, examining the contemporary visual representation of the Indigenous Ainu within touristic spaces and online social media. Drawing on photographic documentation collected across museums, heritage villages, souvenir shops, and image-sharing platforms, the installation traces how Ainu identity curated and circulated for consumption, highlighting the overlap between physical and digital spheres of representation.

The project investigates how touristic imagery mediates Ainu culture through recurring visual tropes—traditional dress, Indigenous nature association, and material crafts—often isolated from historical and political contexts. While these representations may be showcased as 'authentic', they frequently reproduce a taxidermic and folklorized image of Indigeneity. This showcases tensions between visibility and erasure in touristic representation, asking whose perspectives are privileged in the visual economy of tourism.

## **Animals in nature or animals as nature: Tensions in nature-based tourism**

*Kate Dashper*  
*Leeds Beckett University*  
*United Kingdom*  
[k.dashper@leedsbeckett.ac.uk](mailto:k.dashper@leedsbeckett.ac.uk)

*Adele Doran*  
*Jason King*

England's national nature reserves (NNRs) represent some of the most ecologically valuable protected spaces in the country, home to important habitats, species and geology. There are currently 224 NNRs in England, covering approximately 0.8% of the country's land surface. As well as being sites of important flora and fauna, NNRs are attractions that are open to the public for recreation and visitation, providing spaces for nature-based tourism. Animals (we include mammals, birds, insects and aquatic life in this broad heading for convenience) are integral to these protected sites and often are a major draw for tourists. Charismatic species – predominantly mammals like the red squirrel – are often the biggest attraction, but rare bird species and other animals can also bring in large numbers of visitors to these ecologically fragile sites. These native species are identified as part of nature, as valuable and valued, and integral to nature-based tourism.

However, tourists often also bring animals with them to NNRs and other protected sites – mainly dogs, but also horses and some other species. These animals may be seen by some (e.g., site managers, conservationists) as outsiders in these spaces, unsettling wildlife, leaving waste that causes nutrient damage, and damaging the terrain, amongst other unwanted behaviours. These 'visitor animals' are not seen to be part of nature and can be positioned as intruders who are unwelcome in natural spaces.

In this paper we draw on insights from an ongoing study of outdoor recreation and tourism on England's NNRs to explore some of these tensions in practice. Through three case studies we consider how the differential status and value attached to different animals affects responses to them, from tourists, from site managers and from local residents. Animals can be seen as both part of nature – special, attractive, and something to be

protected and valued – and as harmful to nature – damaging what is otherwise represented as pure and clean - exposing some of the tensions and inconsistencies in human-animal relations within nature-based tourism.

## **Caring for the city - Placemaking in Tourism and Urban Development**

*Cornelia Dlabaja*

*University of Applied Sciences for Management & Communication*

*Austria*

[cornelia.dlabaja@fh-wien.ac.at](mailto:cornelia.dlabaja@fh-wien.ac.at)

A key question of our time is how we want to live together and what makes a great place to live in times of commodification and touristification of social infrastructures. Depending on what role we play in this context, as citizens, planners, local politicians, destination managers, we can learn from each other's knowledge; therefore, the paper focuses on the question of what planning can learn from tourism and vice versa and how placemaking can contribute to this context. The paper is the result of an interdisciplinary conversation within the scope of our "Caring for the City" project, which aims to build on what we have learnt from heritage cities challenged by touristification and density through overtourism, through placemaking and community-led approaches. It provides the scientific and urbanistic basis for the playbook 'Places to Be - Placemaking at the intersection of Tourism, Urban Planning and Everyday City Live' which is a collaboration between the funded professorship on urban and tourism development, Urban Innovation and Vienna Tourism.

The paper addresses placemaking at the intersection of tourism and urban development, focusing on tools for creating resilient, inclusive, vibrant, accessible and livable places in the city. The paper builds on the work of Joan Tronto and her book caring democracy (Joan Tronto, 2013), Elke Krasny and Judith Fritz's book Critical Care: Architecture and Urbanism for a Broken Planet (2019) and the publication Caring for the City (Dlabaja, 2021). Central to placemaking is the co-creation of spaces with communities, recognising residents as key experts of their neighborhoods. Placemaking priorities initiatives rooted in local history, culture, and traditions. This reorientation shifts away from standardised and commercialised tourism products, towards more authentic, socially grounded and regenerative encounters that generate benefits for local economies and ecosystems alike. The considerations for multi-actor settings are informed by the Learning Journey in the Inner City of Vienna (Dlabaja 2025), alongside lessons from Urban Living Labs in Rotterdam (Horgan 2022). These examples highlight the need to integrate diverse actor constellations and stakeholder interests into planning and tourism management processes in order to build ownership, social innovation, and long-term sustainability.

## **Problematic Heritage for Sale? Students' Perceptions of Ottoman & Communist Heritage in Bulgaria**

*Elka Dogramadjieva*

*Sofia University*

*Bulgaria*

[elka@qea.uni-sofia.bg](mailto:elka@qea.uni-sofia.bg)

Based on justification of the term "problematic" cultural heritage in the Bulgarian context and a brief review of approaches to utilizing such heritage for tourism in extant literature, the presentation will be focused on the findings of a nationwide survey exploring students' perceptions of the tourist utilization of Ottoman and Communist heritage in Bulgaria. Both types of heritage are defined as "problematic" due to their contested nature, stemming from

unresolved historical legacies and conflicting societal interpretations that continue to generate tension and debate regarding their value, meaning, and role in national identity. The empirical study was conducted between December 2020 and December 2025 using two separate online questionnaires, each completed by approximately 300 university students from a wide range of academic disciplines and levels of study across the country. The study presents a comparative analysis of the extent to which Ottoman and Communist heritage are considered appropriate for tourism, examining both students' perceptions of general public attitudes and their own individual levels of support.

Attention is paid to the factors students identify as enabling or hindering the tourism utilization of these heritage types, as well as to their suggestions for meaningful and responsible interpretive strategies in presenting such contested pasts. By foregrounding student perspectives, the study offers insights into the attitudes of the younger and better educated part of the contemporary Bulgarian society and contributes to ongoing discussions regarding (problematic) heritage interpretation in the context of tourism.

### **Worker Well-being and Social Dialogue in Platformised Tourism and Hospitality**

*Tara Duncan*

*Thompson Rivers University/Dalarna University*

*Canada/Sweden*

[taduncan@tru.ca](mailto:taduncan@tru.ca)

*Fiona Bakas*

[fionabakas@edu.ulisboa.pt](mailto:fionabakas@edu.ulisboa.pt)

*Monica Coros*

*Dora Fonesca*

*Tania Gaspar*

*Stanislav Ivanov*

*Eleonora Rossi*

*Michela Trentin*

This conceptual paper intends to interrogate the tensions surrounding the role of social dialogue in the landscape of increasing platformisation of tourism and hospitality work. The paper utilises the conceptual framework developed for the FUTOURWORK Horizon Europe project. FUTOURWORK's aim is to specifically address the digital transformations occurring in tourism and hospitality work through an intersectional, gendered lens. Focusing on social dialogue and well-being, the main objective of the project is to enhance decent work and dignity for the tourism and hospitality workforce.

Through this lens, the paper will put forward two interlinking arguments. The first is that there is a persistent rupture between vulnerable or precarious tourism and hospitality workers (i.e. women, and/or new migrants) and most forms of social dialogue in tourism and hospitality.

This is especially true for front-line, low skilled, low-paid, platform workers. The second argument is that tourism and hospitality workers' well-being depends upon meaningful social dialogue. The intersection of these two arguments lies in the way algorithmic management, intrinsic to the platformisation of this type of work, embeds power asymmetries and reproduces coder bias. At the same time, the intersectional and gendered character of tourism and hospitality work, where many front- and back-of-house roles remain feminized, is being reshaped by platformisation processes that are designed and regulated within predominantly male-dominated domains. A final point is that scholarly debate on these issues remains fragmented, with discussions of labour relations, digitalisation, and well-being largely confined to separate academic outputs and journals, and showing limited cross-fertilisation.

The paper will conclude by highlighting the pivotal role of social dialogue in shaping the future of workers' well-being in tourism and hospitality, particularly in the context of accelerating platformisation. At the same time, it challenges researchers and policymakers to acknowledge that the policy and legal frameworks underpinning social dialogue remain marginal in practice, omnipresent in theory, and yet largely absent in implementation.

### **Assessing the effects of magnet-motor beds on housekeeping employees' health**

*Laia Encinar-Prat*

*CETT Barcelona School of Tourism Hospitality and Gastronomy*

*Spain*

[laia.encinar@cett.cat](mailto:laia.encinar@cett.cat)

*Brina Antúñez Pineda*

*Anais Cavallin*

The housekeeping department is crucial in delivering a high-quality service in hotels, as cleanliness, effective laundry services, and attention to detail in amenities are positively associated with increased customer satisfaction and willingness to return (Giovanni et al., 2022). Despite its importance, the housekeeping department feels unrecognized, and its employees often face higher job insecurity, lower wages, and reduced labor rights compared to in-house staff (Iannuzzi & Sacchetto, 2022). Considering that most of the housekeepers are women from migrant backgrounds, these work conditions contribute to perpetuating gender and racial inequalities in the labor market (Gaspani & Recchi, 2024). Furthermore, the repetitive nature of housekeeping tasks and uncomfortable postures can lead to musculoskeletal disorders. In particular, bed-making is recognized as a high-risk activity due to constant bending, twisting, and lifting movements (Chijioke et al., 2019). This high physical strain underscores the need for ergonomic redesign to protect workers from injuries (Hignett & Ergonomist, 2000).

This study aims to evaluate the impact of implementing magnet-motor beds on housekeeping employees at a four-star hotel in Barcelona. Firstly, three beds that lift automatically with the approach of a magnet were implemented in a four-star hotel in Barcelona for 8 months. During this period, all housekeeping employees had the opportunity to use these beds as part of their daily tasks at least once, in addition to the standard beds present in the remaining hotel rooms. After this period, semi-structured interviews were conducted with all 10 housekeeping employees at the hotel. The interview questions aimed to collect information about the physical and emotional impacts of standard and magnet-motor beds to compare their effects, as well as to identify possible advantages or inconveniences associated with the use of magnet-motor beds from the employees' perspective.

Since this research is ongoing, the expected results will provide insights into the effectiveness of the magnet-motor beds on employees' health. The study also aims to guide managerial decisions regarding the broader potential implementation of these beds in hotels or modifications to their design to better suit housekeepers' needs.

## **Experiential learning among young people during study trips to Holocaust memorial sites**

*Laia Encinar-Prat*

*CETT Barcelona School of Tourism, Hospitality and Gastronomy*

*Spain*

[laia.encinar@cett.cat](mailto:laia.encinar@cett.cat)

*Marta Salvador-Almela*

[marta.salvador@cett.cat](mailto:marta.salvador@cett.cat)

Dark tourism has increasingly been examined as a field with significant educational potential (Stone, 2012). Memory spaces can play a significant educational role, especially for young people, who are key agents in the development of democratic values, including respect for human rights, tolerance, critical reflection, and peace (Light et al., 2019). In this context, education grounded in the principle of “never again” is essential for achieving these objectives. Such education extends beyond formal educational settings and includes visits to dark tourism sites, such as museums, memorials, and commemorative places. These sites become essential for conveying the past to subsequent generations and for engaging young people in history (Light et al., 2019).

Trips to Holocaust memorial sites generate experiential learning that impacts students' cognitive and emotional dimensions (Bussu et al., 2023; Romi & Lev, 2007). Thus, the objective of this research is to examine the contribution of experiential learning in historical sites to youngsters' cognitive and emotional dimensions, and to the reflections and lessons learned in relation to contemporary societal issues.

The study is based on a case study in the framework of the Manresa-Mauthausen project, which involved a study trip for high school students to different World War II historical sites with the objective of disseminating history and raising awareness of democratic values. Specifically, a 4-day trip is organised to visit Ebensee memorial, the concentration camps of Mauthausen and Gusen and Hartheim castle.

The study's methodology is qualitative, based on a semi-structured interview conducted after the study trip. 33 high school students who participated in the trip answered the interview. The interview questions aimed to collect information about different aspects of experiential learning in historical sites by youngsters, including the cognitive and emotional dimensions, as well as the reflections and lessons learnt in relation to the present. The qualitative data will be analysed through thematic analysis within the three dimensions of experiential learning. The findings will inform the design of educational and interpretive strategies tailored to memorial contexts, thereby promoting critical reflection, democratic values, and empathy among young people.

## **Measuring Heritage Visitor Experience in Situ: Operationalising a Multidimensional Model in Practice**

*Liese Exelmans*

*Karel de Grote University of Applied Sciences*

*Belgium*

[liese.exelmans@kdq.be](mailto:liese.exelmans@kdq.be)

Heritage visitor experience is a central concept in tourism and heritage studies, yet it remains challenging to operationalise in ways that are both theoretically grounded and empirically applicable in real-world heritage settings. While heritage has been widely theorised as experiential, relational and socially constructed, relatively few studies have translated these insights into measurement models that can be applied in situ and meaningfully inform heritage practice.

This study presents the development and implementation of a multidimensional model for measuring heritage visitor experience, building on the work of Packer and Ballantyne (2016, 2018). Through an iterative research process combining literature review, expert consultation and pilot testing, the model was refined into fourteen dimensions capturing emotional, cognitive, social and embodied aspects of place-based heritage engagement. The model was applied in an in-situ case study at a major heritage site in Flanders to test its feasibility under real-world conditions. A multilingual visitor survey (Dutch, French and English) was administered during actual site visits, resulting in 660 completed responses. This real-time data collection allowed for the capture of visitor experience as it unfolded, rather than as a retrospective or abstract evaluation. Visitor data were complemented by structured reflections from the site's professional staff, enabling a comparison between visitor-reported experiences and institutional expectations and assumptions. Findings show that visitors predominantly experience the site through dimensions of care and conservation, aesthetic appreciation and relaxation. This underscores the site's contribution to affective attachment and well-being, dimensions increasingly recognized as central to the social value of heritage. At the same time, variation across other dimensions points to diverse modes of engagement and differing experiential profiles among visitors. By combining a theoretically grounded operationalisation with a live, practice-oriented survey method, this study demonstrates how heritage visitor experience can be measured systematically in situ. In addition to capturing experiential diversity, the model also provides a framework for identifying alignments and gaps between intended and perceived experience dimensions. As such, it offers heritage organisations a basis for evidence-informed interventions aimed at strengthening visitor experience and clarifying place identity within heritage tourism contexts.

## **Supporting Digital Innovation in the Blue Economy for sustainable tourism**

*Ann Fitzgerald*  
*Munster Technological University (MTU)*  
*Ireland*  
[ann.fitzgerald@mtu.ie](mailto:ann.fitzgerald@mtu.ie)

*Fiona Scott Hayward*  
[Fiona.ScottHayward@mtu.ie](mailto:Fiona.ScottHayward@mtu.ie)

*Mary Rose Stafford*  
[Mary.Rose.Stafford@mtu.ie](mailto:Mary.Rose.Stafford@mtu.ie)

Tourism microenterprises contribute significantly to the economy, social health and development of their regions, and their resilience is central to the success of the industry. However, they currently operate in a challenging business environment. One key factor which can contribute to resilience is the industry's transition towards the use of digital technologies.

DIBEST (Digital Innovation in the Blue Economy for sustainable tourism) is a transnational collaborative project supporting a network of Blue Economy microenterprises, using a triple helix model of business partner-higher education institution-tourism federation across 4 countries. Through the design, development and delivery of a program incorporating training, mentoring and networking, DIBEST provides the tools to implement digitalisation practices and more sustainable and environmentally friendly tourism within each region. The project commenced in September 2023 and will finish in July 2026.

DIBEST assessed the needs of tourism microenterprises in the Atlantic coast region by completing a situational analysis, literature review and training needs analysis. The tourism industry is predominantly comprised of small or micro indigenous businesses. According to Muller et al (2019), 99.8% of enterprises in Europe are micro or small to medium enterprises,

and they are responsible for 66.6% of employment. Their size, along with issues such as isolation, fragmentation and seasonality, limits the financial and human resources available to them for the implementation of digitalisation. Furthermore, it was determined that Micro-enterprises require a level of support tailored to their specific needs

A comprehensive programme, comprising educational training, mentoring and networking was designed and is being implemented. Both quantitative and qualitative data will be gathered between January and April 2026 to review two issues relating to digital technologies and the participating microenterprises during the program, namely the learning and the change of behaviour/attitudes/perceptions. The data will be processed and analysed March-May 2026 with a full report due by June 2026.

It is hoped that DIBEST has provided a foundation for participating microenterprises to advance digital transition and innovation, thus optimising business opportunities and ensuring a more resilient future. In addition, findings of DIBEST can inform future policy direction in terms of funding and supports for the digital transition.

### **Citizen science in tourism: co-created narratives for fostering regenerative thinking in urban areas**

*Clotilde Formica*  
*Munster Technology University*  
*Ireland*  
[r00277236@mymtu.ie](mailto:r00277236@mymtu.ie)

The present research aims to explore how co-interpreted narrative analysis within a qualitative citizen science framework can foster regenerative thinking in urban settings. While citizen science is predominantly implemented through contributory (Hadjichambi et al., 2023), quantitative approaches, this qualitative study adopts a participatory action research methodology that centres on the quality of participation among residents and local stakeholders in the selected case studies. The pilot case study of the research is Barrack Street: an urban neighbourhood in Cork, Ireland particularly affected by issues related to dereliction. The research engages residents and local stakeholders in generating and collectively interpreting stories that reflect their experiences, values, and relationships with place. Storytelling is used as a collaborative analytical process, capable of capturing multiple perspectives and a "plurivocal" understanding of urban life. By sharing interpretive control with participants, the study aims to enhance ownership of the narratives and deepen engagement in local knowledge production. Through narrative analysis, the research explores how citizen-generated storytelling can strengthen sense of place and urban identity, and cultivate stewardship as foundational elements of regenerative practice. A key aspect of the study consists in approaching regenerative tourism from the perspective of residents rather than visitors, positioning regenerative thinking in an urban context relatively overlooked in existing research. The study seeks to develop methodological insights and practical guidelines for integrating participatory storytelling into urban regeneration and citizen science initiatives.

## **Holding Up the Tower of Pisa: An Exploration of Structured Representation, Playful Practice, and Tourist Agency Through Images and Video**

*Brian Garrod*  
Swansea University  
United Kingdom  
[Brian.garrod@swansea.ac.uk](mailto:Brian.garrod@swansea.ac.uk)

*Nika Balomenou*  
[nika.balomenou@swansea.ac.uk](mailto:nika.balomenou@swansea.ac.uk)

*Antonis Kyparissis*

*Aggelos Panayiotopoulos*  
[a.panayiotopoulos@ljmu.ac.uk](mailto:a.panayiotopoulos@ljmu.ac.uk)

This visual exploration revisits the widely recognisable "holding up the tower" photograph at the Leaning Tower of Pisa — a playful photographic ritual built on a technique known as forced perspective, shaped by circulating visual conventions and reinforced through social media. Situated within a broader study examining tourist practices through the lens of the circle of representation and its interaction with processes of self-representation, it focuses on a dimension of practice that emerged unexpectedly through on-site observation.

The presentation is built around a curated sequence of photographs and short video clips captured in situ. Rather than focusing on photographic outcomes, it stays with what unfolds in the moments leading up to image capture: the positioning of bodies, the negotiation of space, the watching and mimicking of others, and the coordination between participants. What appears as a highly standardised act begins to look, at closer range, like a dynamic and collective process.

These observations suggest that such practices cannot be understood solely through frameworks of representation and reproduction, which miss a core element that becomes visible only on site: the enjoyment tourists derive from participating. This is not something anticipated before arrival, but something that emerges and envelops them as they step into the piazza in front of the Leaning Tower of Pisa—resembling a moment of collective effervescence, not unlike a Mexican wave at a football match. It is not the reason they are there, but it is the practice that makes the moment enjoyable rather than purely utilitarian. This unexpected dimension is explored through the lens of Huizinga's notion of the magic circle of play.

## **Hotels as Community Anchors for Everyday Resilience in Polycrisis**

*Ronja Geißendörfer*  
Fraunhofer-Institute for Industrial Engineering IAO  
Germany  
[ronja.geissendoerfer@iao.fraunhofer.de](mailto:ronja.geissendoerfer@iao.fraunhofer.de)

*Vanessa Borkmann*

Crises and chronic disruptions increasingly materialise locally through pressures on everyday provisioning, labour markets, social cohesion, and the viability of neighbourhood services. While hotels are frequently discussed as social infrastructure, their neighbourhood facing role as service nodes for community collaboration beyond visitor economies remains empirically under specified. This paper examines hotels as community anchors from a service ecosystem perspective, focusing on resident expectations, preferred service

portfolios, and participation arrangements and legitimacy boundaries of participation and support functions under conditions of polycrisis.

The study combines a systematic literature review, iterative stakeholder workshops and a weighted online survey in Germany. The survey covered German speaking respondents aged 16 to 69 (N 4880) and included a targeted subgroup of residents living near a hotel (n 791). It captures expectations about local value creation, willingness to use and pay for hotel services beyond accommodation, and preferred engagement modes including membership access, reciprocal service exchange, ambassador roles, and paid work opportunities. Findings indicate broad normative expectations that hotels should contribute to local value creation, prosperity and collaborative governance. Support is also substantial for involving local communities in hotel value chains and for active partnerships with local entities. Neighbourhood service interest concentrates on everyday needs and locally relevant amenities, such as access to basic provisioning. More specialised aid efforts, such as care for homeless individuals or refugees, elicit mixed responses, signalling legitimacy boundaries and the need for partnership based governance.

Acceptance of engagement mechanisms resembles a marketplace logic, with market comparable pricing and paid engagement rated most positively, yet membership models and reciprocal exchange also emerge as plausible pathways when perceived as fair and mutually beneficial. These expectations align with the conference focus on power, participation and the conditions under which collaboration becomes socially legitimate.

Interpreting these patterns through social infrastructure and third place theory, and a service ecosystem perspective, we discuss design implications for partnership-based collaboration between hotels, residents, local businesses and public actors. The contribution advances crisis focused debates on anchoring co-creation in everyday service ecosystems while maintaining social legitimacy and equitable participation.

## **Exploration of The Influence of Menu Writing in the Irish Food Sector**

*James Grimes*

*Munster Technology University*

*Ireland*

[james@jamesfoodadvisory.com](mailto:james@jamesfoodadvisory.com)

*Angela Wright*

[angela.wright@mtu.ie](mailto:angela.wright@mtu.ie)

This study explores how a diverse selection of professional chefs in Ireland approach menu composition by investigating their methods for balancing creativity and profitability, while optimising outcomes from a business viability and consumer satisfaction perspective. Additionally, the study explores their support of local food producers and motives for same. This investigation is set within the context of volatile labour markets and parallel internal management influences and extraneous difficult factors.

This qualitative research engaged with 17 professionals from across the Irish food sector chosen for their expertise across various culinary operations. Data was collected and analysed using (Clarke & Braun, 2017) in-depth examination of re-occurring themes, providing rich data, understanding and perspectives.

Key findings of this study underscore the importance of food menu composition in driving revenue while refining food cost management models for accurate profit margin calculations. Gaps exist between financial strategies taught in culinary education and their real-world application, highlighting implementation barriers.

Participants discussed the 'brain-drain' of experienced chefs to alternative industries leading to a void in mentorship of early career chefs and an absence of continuing professional development. Recommendations include a regulatory framework for the Irish food sector to support career progression and professional recognition advancing both theoretical and

practical knowledge. The empirical outputs will benefit all stakeholders in the sector, adding to the existing literature while providing practical further pathways.

### **From dark pasts to opera at the Arena: Repurposing heritage at Verona's historic city centre**

*Adrian Guachalla*  
*London Metropolitan University*  
*United Kingdom*  
[a.guachalla@londonmet.co.uk](mailto:a.guachalla@londonmet.co.uk)

The Roman Arena, located south of Verona's UNESCO World Heritage Site for over 2000 years, is a multipurpose venue historically used to host gladiatorial games, public executions, and bullfights among other public spectacles. Therefore, its rich heritage is linked to critical discourse and extensive ethical issues arising from human and animal exploitation, suffering, and death for public entertainment. Having experienced periods of decline due to neglect and natural disasters, it presently stands as one of Verona's most notorious heritage sites, and the largest in scale. Adding to its physical presence, which is naturally connected with the city's urban landscape, it has been effectively repurposed as the venue for the Arena di Verona Opera Summer Festival. Recognised as the world's largest open-air musical event of its kind, the festival attracts between 13000 and 15000 spectators each evening across 45 to 50 performances per season. This conceptual paper examines the case of the Arena and highlights the threefold dimensions of tourism activity it catalyses, which sit across dark, heritage and music tourism. It evaluates this case study of repurposed heritage against the blueprint of the European Commission's framework for cultural heritage, as its significance and current operations are directly linked with social inclusion, sustainability, conservation, innovation and internationalisation of tourist destinations. Adding complexity to the case study, the use of opera for audience development purposes faces challenges related to the genre's perception as elitist and its links with issues such as social exclusion and cultural capital development. In view of the magnitude of the social, economic and environmental pressures and opportunities that the Arena and the Opera Festival generate, the paper discusses their implications through the lenses of dark, heritage and music tourism theoretical frameworks. Finally, it proposes methodological approaches to consolidate a deeper understanding of the repurposing of longstanding dark heritage for culture, music and the festivalisation of World Heritage Sites.

### **REConnect: Regenerative leisure practices, ecological justice and community-led nature recovery in a river catchment landscape**

*Jenny Hall*  
*York St John University*  
*United Kingdom*  
[j.hall@yorksj.ac.uk](mailto:j.hall@yorksj.ac.uk)

REConnect is a five-year partnership programme examining how everyday leisure practices shape pro-environmental behavioural change within a national park river catchment in the North York Moors, UK. Rather than treating leisure as a backdrop to environmental engagement, this paper positions leisure as a key site through which ecological relations, responsibilities, and justice are produced and sustained.

While research on nature connectedness in National Parks is growing (Richardson et al., 2022), leisure studies have paid limited attention to how routine, informal leisure practices contribute to nature recovery through posthumanist (Braidotti, 2013) and ecological justice (Schlosberg, 2014) perspectives. Drawing on posthumanist and justice theories, the study

conceptualises leisure practices, meanings and capacities as a pathway through which humans, non-humans, and landscapes co-produce environmental care. Using sensory ethnography and a core delivery partnership theory-of-change workshop adopting a logic model approach (Doick & Wilson, 2015), the research identified four co-created pathways to behavioural change. Findings show how leisure practices, such as walking, volunteering, informal riverside recreation, and everyday encounters with water and wildlife, cultivate embodied awareness, emotional attachment, and place-based identities. These leisure encounters reinforce social norms, develop ecological knowledge and skills, and enable collective action that extends beyond formal conservation spaces. A bespoke co-created 'source-to-sea' framework traces how leisure practices accumulate across time and space, translating everyday actions into measurable biodiversity outcomes. REConnect demonstrates that leisure is central to regenerative place-making, offering a critical mechanism through which communities enact ecological justice, support multispecies well-being, and contribute to climate-resilient river-catchment landscapes.

### **Co-Creating Regenerative Tourism Futures: Preliminary Insights from Participatory Action Research in Iceland**

*Annika Hanau*  
*University of Wuppertal*  
*Germany*  
[hanau@uni-wuppertal.de](mailto:hanau@uni-wuppertal.de)

As tourism destinations worldwide navigate intersecting crises of climate change, overtourism, and socio economic inequality, regenerative tourism has emerged as a paradigm that moves beyond harm reduction towards actively enhancing the wellbeing of socio ecological systems. While the concept is increasingly visible in academic and policy debates, its operationalisation at the destination level remains uneven and conceptually under specified. In particular, there is a need for empirically grounded, destination sensitive research that examines how regenerative principles are enacted through collaborative and community centred processes.

This contribution forms part of an ongoing PhD project and adopts an academic conceptual perspective while drawing on preliminary empirical insights from participatory action research conducted in Iceland. The research combines regenerative tourism workshops with in depth stakeholder interviews across two contrasting destination contexts: the urban gateway of Reykjavík and the rural, community based destination of Hvammstangi. These cases allow for a comparative exploration of how regenerative thinking is interpreted, negotiated, and translated into practice under different governance conditions, scales, and socio economic dependencies. Conceptually, the analysis builds on insights from a previously published case study on O'ahu, Hawai'i, which demonstrated that regenerative destination strategies risk remaining largely symbolic when not underpinned by binding governance structures, political commitment, and mechanisms for community ownership. Preliminary findings suggest that although sustainability has become an established baseline within tourism practice, regenerative tourism requires dialogical learning spaces that enable stakeholders to re conceptualise tourism as a living system embedded in place specific ecological relationships, cultural values, and community aspirations. Participatory workshops functioned as arenas of transformative learning, where tourism entrepreneurs, municipal actors, and community representatives collectively explored tensions between economic reliance on tourism, environmental stewardship, and social justice. The comparison between destinations highlights how regenerative capacity is shaped by local agency, institutional arrangements, and the degree to which community voices are embedded in decision making processes.

By combining conceptual reflection with destination based preliminary insights, this contribution aligns closely with the aims of Special Track 1 and offers a basis for critical

discussion on how regenerative tourism can be operationalised through community led co creation in times of polycrisis.

### **Community-Based Tourism: crises of collaboration?**

*Karen Harris*  
*University of Pretoria*  
*South Africa*  
[karen.harris@up.ac.za](mailto:karen.harris@up.ac.za)

*CR Botha*  
[christoffel.botha@up.ac.za](mailto:christoffel.botha@up.ac.za)

In as much as Community-Based Tourism has been heralded as a cure-all for the economic upliftment of marginalised communities, it has been equally critiqued for its failure to deliver on its mandate. Conceptually, CBT endeavours to involve communities as active participants in the tourism domain to ensure that the benefits of tourism remain within these communities. This notion has become increasingly challenged alongside a global escalation in opposition to tourists and tourism which has led to a cautionary, if not ambivalent, approach to the touristic space. It is within these contexts that this paper engages with this dual dilemma and offers two newly devised innovative solutions to redress this crisis of collaboration.

Adopting a mixed-methods research approach with a principally qualitative design, the research appraises a selection of ten CBT operating models in the global North and South. While much theory underpinning these CBT models pivots the community at the centre in terms of ownership, control and management, there has been widespread acknowledgement that while benefits exist, there are many obstacles and failures making CBT less optimal and even problematic. Moreover, it is apparent that governments have raised concerns about the lack of optimization of CBT.

The field research comprised interviews with CBT stakeholders including community members, government representatives and private sector individuals. As a result, innovative context-specific solutions were co-developed to address this crisis of community within CBT. The first solution, coined the "Community Carousel", includes the application of a nuanced, inclusive understanding of "community," recognizing the diversity of identities, cultures, and socio-economic conditions within populations as an elementary baseline for an operating scenario. The second solution, coined the "C-based-T Integration", is a context-specific solution that proposes a reimagination of the "base" of CBT, advocating for unremitting and prescribed roles for government and private sector role players throughout the lifecycle of CBT projects.

These two newly devised scenario solutions address the failure of CBT as well as the crisis facing the global tourism sector. They elevate CBT as a constructive and more importantly co-created collaborative endeavour and thereby realign the tourism sector as a more beneficial and constructive sector.

## **Festival Fever: Curating and Commodifying Communities?**

*Karen Harris*  
University of Pretoria  
South Africa  
[karen.harris@up.ac.za](mailto:karen.harris@up.ac.za)

*CR Botha*  
[christoffel.botha@up.ac.za](mailto:christoffel.botha@up.ac.za)

This proposed paper will scrutinise festivals which have long been perceived and positioned as the panacea for ailing rural economies and marginalised communities. These annual events are heralded for the opportunities they provide to position their location, showcase local products and cultures to ultimately attract travellers and tourists and increase local revenue. It will delineate a case study in the southern African region which is typical of much of what occurs across the continent, as well as more generally in the global South. The focus is on the Marula Festival which is held in the northern province of South Africa in a town called Phalaborwa. In 2026 it celebrated its 20th anniversary, however the origin of this traditional festivity dates back centuries. Both here and elsewhere it is an African celebration that marks the ripening and harvesting of the marula fruit which is used for the brewing of traditional beer and more recently other commercial consumer products. While it traditionally marked the onset of the ripening and harvesting of the fruit, the celebration also symbolised cultural identity, ancestral connection and community bonding, the more modern festival has become dominated by modern music and partying to primarily promote tourism, boost the economy and ostensibly heritage preservation. Using a participatory research approach, the community festival participants were engaged with reflective discussions to appraise and assess the extent of the commodification and curation of the community and their positionality. Based on the community engagement prevalent at the Festival, it will evaluate to what extent the Marula Festival has the potential to turn the 'extractiveness' of tourism and economic gain to embrace a more 'regenerative' approach which aligns with the initial origins and foundation of this age-old traditional festival inherent to the community.

## **'Whose community? Taipu Culture, Power, and Participation in Shinjuku Nichome'**

*Katsuya Hasegawa*  
University of Greenwich  
United Kingdom  
[k.hasegawa@greenwich.ac.uk](mailto:k.hasegawa@greenwich.ac.uk)

Gay tourism has been framed as offering opportunities for anonymity, gay-friendly destinations, identity exploration, encounters with like-minded people, and temporary escape from heteronormative societies (Vorobjovas-Pinta and Hardy, 2016). Shinjuku Nichome, Japan's largest gay nightlife district, welcomes gay men as a space detached from the heteronormativity of wider Japanese society and is frequently idealised as an inclusive sanctuary (McLelland, 2000). However, when this district is regarded as an inclusive gay community, internal inequalities and exclusions are often overlooked, raising questions about whose community and for whom inclusion is being achieved.

I employ queer theory to challenge the notion of a homogeneous 'gay community' and highlight the diverse experiences of international gay male tourists in Nichome (Rumens et al., 2018). Through the lens of liminality and Bourdieu's theories (Bourdieu, 2010; Povilaitis et al., 2023), I analyse the dynamics of power and participation within gay tourism. Ethnographic research, including participant observation and interviews conducted between June and September 2024, revealed how spatial arrangements and social interactions shape gay tourists' experiences. Taipu culture (i.e., a socio-cultural semiotic system) is

present in Nichome. In addition to customer restrictions, the categorisation of establishments and bodies (e.g., Japanese vs foreigners, local vs tourists, masculine vs feminine) also shapes subjectivities. Building on work that shows how Nichome distinguishes between locals and foreigners, and further differentiates among foreigners (Baudinette, 2016; Kaneko and Khor, 2024), I treat Taipu culture as a mechanism that organises who becomes visible, who is heard, and who is marginalised.

The findings show that Taipu culture influences gay tourists' experiences in Nichome, acting as both an escape from heteronormativity and as a place of invisible violence. Taipu-based communities serve as symbolic violence, enforcing certain rules and behaviours that promote self-censorship and uphold hegemonic gay ideals, even though they provide some people with a sense of comfort and belonging. I state that exclusion is often used to create inclusion in gay tourism spaces. The focus should shift from creating bounded 'safe communities' to fostering compassion and responsiveness in the fluid encounters that take place as people transition between categories and communities to address inequality and discrimination.

## **Community Participation in Sustainable Mobility Transitions: Insights from Lab Sälenfjällen**

*Tobias Heldt*  
Dalarna University  
Sweden  
[the@du.se](mailto:the@du.se)

*Beatrice Waleghwa*  
[bwg@du.se](mailto:bwg@du.se)

This study presents some initial insights from the newly established geographical transformation initiative Lab Sälenfjällen, part of Shift Sweden's national program for developing innovative solutions for sustainable living environments. The program supports Sweden's transition toward a fossil free and resource efficient society by exploring, testing, and scaling future oriented solutions. As the only transition lab situated outside an urban center, Lab Sälenfjällen responds to the unique challenge of steering the development of Scandinavia's largest mountain tourism destination. Its central mission is to integrate the built environment and mobility systems to demonstrate how a fossil free and resource conscious transition can be realized in a rural mountain context.

The study examines how citizens and civil society organizations can be meaningfully engaged in planning processes to build a deeper understanding of local needs, conditions, and constraints during the transition toward a socially sustainable and attractive place to live, work, and visit. Methodologically, Public Participation Geographic Information Systems (PPGIS) form a key component of this initial study within Lab Sälenfjällen. While previous research highlights the potential of PPGIS to broaden participation and strengthen engagement early in planning, how the method can best complement planning in a rural, tourism intensive context remains underexplored. Addressing this gap is the primary aim of the research.

Previously a declining rural area, Sälenfjällen has grown into a major winter tourism hub—yet one that places increasing pressure on ecosystems, infrastructure, and public services. Visitor numbers fluctuate sharply between seasons, mobility remains highly car dependent, and demand is rising for housing and reliable transport for around 7,000 seasonal workers. At the same time, the needs and everyday realities of approximately 1,000 permanent residents of Sälen village must remain central in the transition process.

## **Chicken or Champion: The Atlantic Salmon in the Anthropocene**

*Gudrún Helgadóttir*  
University of South-Eastern Norway School of Business  
Norway  
[gudrun.helgadottir@usn.no](mailto:gudrun.helgadottir@usn.no)

*Helgi Thorarensen*  
Arctic University of Norway  
Norway  
[helgi.t.thorarensen@uit.no](mailto:helgi.t.thorarensen@uit.no)

The Atlantic salmon is widely perceived as a champion due to its homing instinct and ability to migrate up swift rivers to spawn. It was traditionally an important food source and from medieval times salmon caught in rivers and the ocean, an export commodity. During the Victorian era, salmon angling became an elite sport and a new form of tourism to the salmon rivers in Europe. As a food, salmon became a luxury item. However, with salmon farming development since the 1980ies salmon is an everyday commodity, traded globally, even called the chicken of the ocean. In recent decades commercial fisheries of salmon have all but ceased while tourism and the aquaculture industry have become immensely profitable yet contested.

While both industries are based on the Atlantic salmon their discourses present it very differently: in aquaculture as a domestic animal and in salmon angling as wildlife. This has a wide range of implications in terms of management, policy, animal welfare and nature protection, not to mention marketing and economy. In the discourses on salmon the emotional tenor is high as are the economic stakes.

Catches of Atlantic salmon in rivers have decreased significantly and populations have disappeared from many rivers. This has negatively affected the various stakeholders around salmon angling. Attempts have been made to increase catches through various conservation measures such as habitat restoration, stocking the rivers with eggs or juveniles and adopting the catch-and-release strategy. Restocking and catch-and-release, raise various questions regarding the genetic integrity or wildness of the populations and ethical and ecological questions regarding the catch-and-release strategy.

We investigate these measures using Iceland as a case. We draw upon data on the salmon angling discourse, the development of this industry, stock size and harvest over the last decade. We analyze this in terms of biodiversity, fish physiology, animal ethics, sustainability management, investment and tourism development. As interdisciplinary researchers we are interested in exploring contrasting ideas about salmon, inherent contradictions in angling and protection of salmon with ensuing animal ethics dilemmas.

## **Best City, Best Model: Cape Town & Regenerative Tourism**

*Ruan Henning*  
University of Pretoria  
South Africa  
[ruankh23@icloud.com](mailto:ruankh23@icloud.com)

The city of Cape Town in southern Africa has repeatedly been voted as the “#1 Best City in the World” - a position it has been awarded for six consecutive years showcasing its enduring attractiveness as a global touristic must-see. Its allure is ascribed to a combination of pristine natural beauty, rich heritage, unique history and a range of diverse and colourful cultures. While the latter attributes have contributed to its touristic sustainability, this paper will argue that the city’s development of a public-private tourism model has resulted in regenerative practices and products. The partnership developed between the City of Cape

Town (local municipality) and Cape Town Tourism (official marketing organisation) devised a collaborative model which was subsequently recognised and approved by the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO). Through a qualitative research methodology this paper analyses the attributes of this model and its practical applicability to show how this model has both renewable and reformative qualities that contribute to regenerative tourism – that being tourism that embraces the dynamism of both society and environment restoring and enhancing them in a mutually beneficial way. Through an analytical process of the initiatives and outcomes, it will be shown how the City of Cape Town Tourism Model aligns its touristic goals with public policies and destination strategies making it an ideal example of regenerative tourism. This underscores its success and popularity as a touristic destination. Moreover, it will suggest how this can serve as a viable guideline for expanding tourism development and marketing partnerships and strategies in other destinations that would embrace and support the growth of the sector.

### **Capturing heritage: a case study of co-creation and collaboration in Mamelodi, South Africa**

*Charlene Herselman*  
*University of Pretoria*  
*South Africa*  
[charlene.herselman@up.ac.za](mailto:charlene.herselman@up.ac.za)

*Hannes Engelbrecht*  
*Martina Jordaan*  
*Chris Nkomo*  
*Mfana Mathibela*

Oral histories and storytelling are some of the cornerstones of the tourist experience. As a form of intangible cultural heritage (ICH), or “living expressions inherited from our ancestors” as UNESCO (2003) termed it, the significance of this type of heritage has increased over the last few decades, especially for tourism. In addition to providing context and value to tangible sites, ICH offers authentic and immersive experiences that go beyond the usual tourist experience, offering deeper, more personalised, and emotional connections to a destination. By its very nature, ICH is complicated to capture and conserve and run the risk of being lost forever. Some of the associated risks include commodification, loss of authenticity, and ‘cultural flattening’ brought on by globalisation. This paper explores and unpacks some of the complexities and contradictions associated with ICH, and oral histories in particular, which is then illustrated through a case study. Since 2022, the University of Pretoria’s Department of History, Heritage and Cultural Tourism, in collaboration with the Mamelodi campus and Mamelodi Historical Society, have been involved in a project to capture the rich, irreplaceable and often unrecorded intangible heritage of Mamelodi, an Apartheid-era township located northeast of Pretoria.

Through a targeted service-learning pedagogy, this project sets three challenges for students. Firstly, students are challenged to conceptualise what viable and sustainable tourism development might look like for a selected site in Mamelodi. Secondly, students are encouraged through a rigorous co-creation process to move beyond traditional desktop research to conducting primary research, mainly through archival sources and oral interviews. These narratives are then synthesised using ArcGIS StoryMaps, creating a digital repository that ensures cultural continuity while making Mamelodi’s history accessible to a global audience. These StoryMaps also function as a form of digital decolonization, giving agency back to marginalised community voices. This study contributes to tourism education literature by evaluating how a ‘Community of Practice’ (comprising students, academics, and the Mamelodi community) can mitigate the risks of heritage loss, while simultaneously bridging an ‘industry gap’ by teaching students how to handle living heritage ethically.

## **Viral voyages: the impact of popular culture on tourism, heritage and community**

*Charlene Herselman*

*University of Pretoria*

*South Africa*

[charlene.herselman@up.ac.za](mailto:charlene.herselman@up.ac.za)

The phenomenal impact of popular culture, encompassing film, television, and books, amongst others, on tourism has been well-documented, especially anecdotally. Numerous studies have demonstrated that popular media like film and television can influence the decision of where to travel. While 2018 data endorsed by the UNWTO estimated that 80 million visitors chose destinations based almost exclusively on screened products, this figure has likely been eclipsed by the rapid expansion of global streaming platforms and viral social media “set-jetting”.

This paper investigates how ‘viral’ popularity dictates travel behaviour beyond the initial decision-making and challenges the integrity of the host destination. Do these spaces, co-created by popular culture, tourists and the tourism industry, with or without the consent of the host community, consider and reflect the ‘authentic’ cultural place? While the economic benefits of “going viral” as a tourism destination may be obvious, there are very real risks associated with a sudden increase in visitor numbers, including overcrowding, environmental degradation, disruption for the local community, damage to heritage, and concerns over authenticity. To unpack this, the study utilises a comparative case study analysis of three globally recognised film tourism phenomena: The Twilight Saga (Forks, USA), Outlander (Scotland), and Game of Thrones (Dubrovnik, Croatia). These case studies explore how disparate destinations grapple with unique socio-cultural risks. In Forks, the study examines the cult-like nature of popular culture tourism and its long-term sustainability after the initial media frenzy subsides. The Outlander case study explores the tension between historical authenticity and tangible heritage. Finally, Dubrovnik serves as a critical example of overtourism, where the physical and social carrying capacity of a UNESCO World Heritage site is pushed to breaking point by a screen-driven narrative.

The findings suggest that viral popularity creates a “hyper-tourism” state that bypasses traditional destination life-cycle models, leaving local infrastructure and communities ill-equipped to respond. This paper argues that sustainable development in these “unlikely” destinations requires a shift from traditional marketing to narrative management. The paper concludes by proposing a framework that integrates digital storytelling with community-led co-creation of destination narratives and heritage conservation.

## **Tourism in declining town centres – overcoming systemic development barriers**

*Anne-Mette Hjalager*

*University of Southern Denmark*

*Denmark*

[hjalager@sam.sdu.dk](mailto:hjalager@sam.sdu.dk)

*Jesper Piihl*

*Steffen Korsgaard*

The crisis facing small and medium-sized town centers is an increasingly widespread phenomenon across many countries and regions. It is characterized by population decline, the withdrawal or closure of commercial activities, insufficient maintenance of heritage assets, buildings, and infrastructure, and an overall loss of attractiveness for both residents and visitors. This paper examines the systemic barriers that impede the coordinated

development of tourism alongside other economic and community functions in challenged urban centers. The Danish town of Kolding serves as the empirical case in this research. Municipal planning instruments constitute the primary means through which local governance and policy are articulated. However, urban development is simultaneously shaped by a broader set of forces. In several instances, the enhancement of urban quality is constrained by general, government-initiated laws, regulations, and administrative practices—particularly in areas such as safety, environmental protection, and financial stability. While these measures are well justified, their application within dense and multifunctional urban structures can generate significant development challenges. In this context, such constraints are conceptualized as systemic development barriers.

The study identifies systemic development barriers in several domains:

- Planning and governance for more flexible, temporary, and cross-sectoral business models.
- Balancing residential and tourism accommodation, avoiding both under-tourism and the risks associated with overtourism.
- Facilitating spatial adaptation and transformation, redefining shared community values, supporting material recirculation, and mobilizing philanthropic resources.
- Managing conflicts in shared urban spaces, including issues related to waste handling, parking, and public space maintenance.
- Encouraging property owners to adopt constructive attitudes and behaviors toward heritage preservation, while simultaneously ensuring investments are both profitable and socially responsible.
- Strengthening communication and knowledge-sharing channels among property owners, businesses, and other stakeholders.

The overarching aim of local governance is to foster a more proactive, forward-looking, and efficient management of urban activities that generates mutual benefits for tourism, residents, and business actors within town centers. Incorporating elements of systems thinking can advance the understanding of complex stakeholder interdependencies and support boundary-spanning interventions required for sustainable and integrated urban development.

### **Circling to land - Travel and tourism in uncertain times. Findings from a global study with leading tourism voices in place, academia and industry**

*Donagh Horgan*

*Inholland University of Applied Sciences*

*Netherlands*

[donagh.horgan@inholland.nl](mailto:donagh.horgan@inholland.nl)

*Ko Koens*

[ko.koens@inholland.nl](mailto:ko.koens@inholland.nl)

The travel and tourism sector has continued to weather an uncertain geopolitical environment despite its rebound since the global pandemic. War and displacement, invasion and mobility restrictions have conspired to create a situation in which destinations are facing increasing, and ever shifting challenges. Operators and travellers must heed the advice of national governments and in some cases are barred from entry at borders and ports. As strategies for sustainable tourism and degrowth decrease in importance, in face of plans for defense and deployment, the geographies of mobility shift and swerve collisions between tourism and geopolitics. Multiple scholars (Papagianni, 2024; Hamida, 2024; Gunay et al., 2025 etc.), across the Global North and South have sounded alarm bells to the wider sector, calling for resilience and regenerative reorganisation.

Destinations in the Southern Mediterranean, long effected by migrant crises are now facing additional decline in visitor numbers due to rerouting and suspension of air travel, particularly

difficult for some destinations seeking to recover from the impacts of terrorism or fanaticism. Elsewhere in urban destinations, culture wars are polarising urban host communities who begin to question the societal value of tourism (Fainstein and Novy, 2025).[HD2.1] Taking a global perspective, this study engages with a set of tourism scholars, living lab stakeholders, and representatives of the travel industry, leveraging existing academic networks, special interest groups and communities of practices. Through a series of semi-structured interviews the research reveals the costs and opportunities for destination development in uncertain times, seeking to illuminate the lived experience of uncertainty in a diverse group of settings. This presentation will feature emergent research from selected cases, seeking to draw thematic and theoretical conclusion that can advance the policy context for sustainable tourism in 2026.

## **The spectral resident voice within the bio-politics of regional DMO formation**

*Michael Humbracht*  
*University of Glasgow*  
*United Kingdom*  
[michael.humbracht@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:michael.humbracht@glasgow.ac.uk)

*Anna de Jong*  
[anna.dejong@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:anna.dejong@glasgow.ac.uk)

*Annelie Sjölander Lindqvist*

The inclusion of resident voice in tourism governance is central to 'just' tourism development. Previous studies on tourism justice have consistently shown that embedding resident voice in governance reinforces community rights and challenges neoliberal growth priorities that prevent community centric governance. Thus, recent studies suggesting a 'local turn' in tourism have argued that the democratic empowerment of resident voice is a key driver in 'just' tourism development. The framing of resident voice as 'local', however, has tended to assume the salience of sovereign policy and planning spaces where resident voice is expressed through local forms of formal dialogue. Previous research has neglected how resident voice is constructed indirectly within governance and becomes entangled with global resident sentiment that takes on local attachment – the implications of which aide in uncovering hidden power relations that open and close pathways towards community centric governance.

To approach this neglect, our paper examines the perceptions and construction of resident voice within the formation of a regional DMO in Gotland, Sweden. We trace how local and global resident voice expressed in media become bound up with the ambitions of local governance actors to re-structure regional tourism governance through sustainable placemaking. To analyse changes in governance, the paper utilizes a Foucauldian discourse analysis of policy documents, media articles and twenty semi-structured interviews with 'decision makers' in government, industry and third-sector roles.

Drawing from bio-political theory, the paper finds the global/local emotional and discursive presence of resident voice haunts governance re-formation by politicising meanings of life attached the resident, tourist and place. This disruptive presence produces a reflexive awareness of policy gaps and power imbalances within governance - opening potential pathways towards increased community participation and tourism regulation. The absence, however, of formal dialogue and parallel media engagement contributes to heightened resident anger and the misrepresentation of community priorities. Without co-developed understanding, 'placemaking' is positioned as an expansion of regional territorial control that aims to attract urban professional migrants and bring the 'resident' into market relations – opening the potential for a spatial division of rights in Gotland between urban leisure areas and rural areas of austerity.

## **AI Adoption Dynamics, Barriers, and Opportunities in Travel Agencies: Practitioner Perspectives from Northern Portugal**

*Alexandra I. Correia*  
*Instituto Politécnico de Viana do Castelo*  
*Portugal*  
[acorreia@estg.ipv.pt](mailto:acorreia@estg.ipv.pt)

*Carlos Fernandes*  
*Matilde Cruz e Sara Paiva*

Travel agencies, traditionally intermediaries between tourists and service providers, face considerable challenges in adapting to this evolving environment (Davenport & Ronanki, 2018). AI's influence extends beyond customer-facing tools, fundamentally transforming business processes and organisational models. The integration of automation and AI's analytical capabilities generates new opportunities for innovation, differentiation, and competitiveness, while necessitating strategic and deliberate adaptation to ongoing changes (Ivanov & Webster, 2017). Although global evidence demonstrates AI's potential to enhance personalisation, optimise information management, and improve operational efficiency (Zsarnoczky, 2017), empirical research on AI adoption among small and medium-sized travel agencies remains scarce (Lopes, 2023).

This study investigates AI integration in travel agencies by examining practitioners' perceptions of benefits, specific applications, and adoption barriers. Employing the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) to guide data collection, the research is based on twelve semi-structured interviews with travel agents from the Minho region in northern Portugal, analysed through systematic thematic content analysis. The findings indicate that AI adoption is generally viewed positively, especially regarding automation, personalisation, and decision support. However, adoption is constrained by financial limitations, insufficient technical skills, and concerns about job displacement, data privacy, and training needs. This study contributes to the tourism AI literature by providing an empirical practitioner perspective from a less-explored context and by offering actionable recommendations to promote responsible and ethically informed AI adoption, thereby enhancing travel agencies' competitiveness.

## **Hospidarity and volunteerism in safe places**

*Anna Irimias*  
*University of Trento*  
*Italy*  
[annarita.irimias@unitn.it](mailto:annarita.irimias@unitn.it)

*Ariel Mitev*

Crises fundamentally reshape how and where volunteering is organised, and the mobility infrastructures that sustain it. When the number of those in need suddenly surges (during war, economic collapse, or disaster) new spatial configurations of solidarity emerge, often anchored in grassroots and local initiatives (Bauman, 2013). These critical moments can trigger an 'explosion of solidarity' that reorganises volunteer activity across specific sites and networks, from border zones to hospitality spaces. To ensure these arrangements become stable and durable, local stakeholders must develop strategic organisational habits, built through the practical work of setting up, coordinating, and managing hosting processes (Burrai, Buda & Stevenson, 2023). These habits embed themselves into the infrastructures of mobility that move people, resources, and volunteers across space. Importantly, the way displaced people are received within these spaces shapes their sense of identity and

belonging: those treated as refugees feel like refugees, while those treated as tourists feel like tourists (Irimiás & Mitev, 2025). Volunteers operating through charitable organisations and hospitality stakeholders play a key spatial role in mediating this experience, determining not only where support is delivered but how it is felt.

We aim to contribute to discussions on volunteering experiences (Baillie Smith, Thomas & Hazeldine, 2021) and solidarity tourism (Dolnicar & McCabe, 2022), while advancing understanding of how crises reshape the spatial organisation of volunteering and the mobility infrastructures that sustain it. Building on the concept of 'hospidarity' (Irimiás & Mitev, 2025) we examine how grassroots volunteer networks and hospitality stakeholders reorganise across space in response to crisis-induced displacement. Our study was conducted in a spa town near the Hungarian-Ukrainian border, a location tragically yet ideally situated to explore spaces where displaced people are received as guests rather than refugees. Employing an interpretative paradigm, we investigate how social roles and volunteerism are perceived and enacted differently within a tourism space, and how the infrastructures of mobility (human, material, and organizational) are configured and sustained over time. We examined the dynamic interplay between being a refugee and a tourist within the hosting environment and explored how hospitality alliances can keep solidarity alive.

### **“Elephants in our backyards”: Tourism as conflict mitigation in Sri Lanka**

*Anuradhi Jayasinghe*

*Griffith University*

*Australia*

[anuradhi.jayasinghe@griffithuni.edu.au](mailto:anuradhi.jayasinghe@griffithuni.edu.au)

*Georgette Leah Burns*

Communities living adjacent to protected areas often experience conflict with wildlife. Wildlife tourism is regarded as a tool to mitigate such conflicts by generating economic benefits for people and thereby increasing their tolerance of wildlife. However, the potential to connect wildlife tourism and human-wildlife conflict mitigation is rarely scrutinised. Sri Lanka has the highest annual elephant deaths due to human elephant conflict (HEC) globally. Walsapugala village in southern Sri Lanka is adjacent to three national parks where foreign tourists show their love for wild elephants by taking photos and observing elephant behaviour while travelling in safari jeeps. However, in the village elephant and human fatalities occur due to HEC, and thus elephants could be assumed to be unloved by the farmers. We conducted an ethnographic study in two of the parks and in the village to understand the relationship between farming communities and elephants, and the potential to positively connect them through wildlife tourism activities. The research revealed negative behaviours towards elephants by national park tourists and safari jeep drivers (e.g., flash photography). Meanwhile, elephants believed to be unloved and in conflict with farmers were cared for (e.g., by avoiding direct torchlight to elephants' eyes). Although farmers experience significant losses, to crops and even lives, due to HEC, and do not receive adequate or timely compensation for these losses, they demonstrated love for elephants (e.g., speaking to them compassionately by calling them “sons”). Farmers also expressed willingness to engage in alternative income-generating activities linked to elephant tourism (e.g., hosting tourists in watch huts to observe farmer livelihoods and wild-elephant behaviours at night), for extra income. Opportunities to positively connect farming communities and elephants in this way, and how such alternative income generation strategies would increase community tolerance towards conflicting elephants, needs further exploration.

## **Family holidays with autistic children: A study of parents' emotion work and service delivery**

*Allan Jepson*  
*University of Hertfordshire*  
*United Kingdom*  
[a.s.jepson@herts.ac.uk](mailto:a.s.jepson@herts.ac.uk)

*Raphaela Stadler*

*Brian Garrod*  
[Brian.garrod@swansea.ac.uk](mailto:Brian.garrod@swansea.ac.uk)

There is growing recognition that neurodivergent tourists, such as those with autism, face significant challenges while traveling. Interviews with parents of autistic children were used to explore service delivery failure in family holidays from the parents' perspective. The analysis found four types of service delivery gap: knowledge, process, people, and communication gaps. These would typically be filled through the application of emotional labour from staff. When this fails to happen, parents are forced to apply emotion work instead, which can be exhausting. Accordingly, this study integrates the concepts of emotion work and emotional labour into the field of service delivery failure. In doing so, it presents a new lens for understanding service delivery gaps and parents' emotion work within the context of family holidaymaking with autistic children. This implies that tourism providers must adapt their services through staff training and development schemes co-created by families, the tourism industry, and governments.

## **Designing Integrative AI for Hospitality: Rethinking SMEs' Digital Futures**

*Xinyue Jiang*  
*Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (UAB)*  
*Spain*  
[1697320@uab.cat](mailto:1697320@uab.cat)

Tourism small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are navigating a prolonged period of crisis marked by limited financial resources, uneven digital capabilities and increasing pressure to adapt to rapid technological change. As larger hotel groups increasingly integrate advanced AI-enabled systems, digital technologies have become a key site where competitive capacity diverges between resource-rich actors and SMEs. This growing technological gap raises important questions about how AI may reshape the ways guests, SME operators and frontline staff participate in and collaborate within hospitality encounters. This paper conceptualises AI not merely as a technological solution but as a socio-technical actor that reconfigures the conditions under which collaborative hospitality experiences emerge. It examines how design features related to understandability, user influence and the presence of meaningful human support shape guests' willingness to engage with such services. By identifying which elements guests value most in AI-mediated encounters, the paper provides insight into how SMEs can prioritise design choices that strengthen acceptance.

Empirically, the paper employs a mixed-method approach combining guest evaluations of AI-enabled service scenarios with qualitative insights from SME hotel managers. Together, these perspectives illuminate how guests interpret AI-mediated interactions and offer SME managers clearer insight into what guests genuinely value in technology-enabled services, while also revealing how SMEs themselves understand the opportunities and structural limitations of adopting such technologies in practice.

Rather than treating AI as a technological layer that further differentiates and fragments actors within the hospitality sector, the paper examines how AI may instead be oriented toward integration—enabling guests, staff and SME operators to engage with one another through more accessible service encounters. The focus is therefore on understanding how design can help bridge emerging digital divides and create conditions for meaningful interaction.

This perspective offers a pathway for more equitable digital transitions, particularly for SMEs facing uneven technological capacities and structural constraints, while emphasising the role of AI in supporting—rather than fragmenting—the relationships between guests, workers and operators.

## **Recognising Women within Platform Work: Case of Ridehailing in the Global South**

*Abbie-Gayle Johnson*

*University of Nottingham*

*United Kingdom*

[abbie-gayle.johnson3@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:abbie-gayle.johnson3@nottingham.ac.uk)

### **Background Information**

This research aims to explore the experiences of women drivers involved in Uber located in Africa. Such destinations remain understudied in research despite the growing collaborations to foster women empowerment. Research on ridesharing, although limited in tourism, mostly focus on consumer groups in which women are treated as part of a collective mixed with men and others rather than separately. Data remains lacking on women's economic development and recognition within the African context (WEF, 2024). This research draws on Honneth's (1996) work on recognition to explore how women platform workers gain recognition in a postcolonial context.

### **Methodology**

This research explores how women gain recognition in platform work in postcolonial contexts by focusing on the case of Uber in Africa, which was launched to cater to women drivers. Uber brought in USD\$79 million in tourism spending in Africa since 2013 (Park et al., 2021). We utilise netnography and conduct interviews that are thematically analysed.

### **Findings**

Findings illustrate that platform work for women is a transformative labour practice that can result in practices of recognition. Recognition emerges as practices for reclaiming national sovereignty, cultivating voice for respectability, regulating individual emotions and receiving ecosystem recognition.

### **Theoretical and Practical Implications**

This study find that women platform workers are exposed to types of recognition that are not purely emotional, which is contrary to Honneth's (1996) theoretical proposition. Furthermore, this research showcases why it is necessary to incorporate the voices of Black women in postcolonial destinations and the Global South to gain an understanding of their views and experiences within platform work- ridehailing. Participant 20 declared that "none of us (ridehailing women drivers) wants to feel invisible".

## **Reframing LGBTQ+-Friendly Destination Image in Thailand through SOGIE: An Ethics and Care Perspective**

*Antony King Fung Wong*  
*The Hong Kong Polytechnic University*  
*Hong Kong SAR*  
[antony-k-f.wong@polyu.edu.hk](mailto:antony-k-f.wong@polyu.edu.hk)

*Thanakarn Bella Vongvisitsin*  
[btvongvi@hkmu.edu.hk](mailto:btvongvi@hkmu.edu.hk)

Thailand is widely promoted as an LGBTQ+-friendly destination, celebrated for visible gender diversity, pride events, and a thriving queer tourism economy. Yet this branding coexists with uneven legal recognition and differential protections across sexual and gender identities. Despite expanding public visibility, Thailand's legal and policy frameworks have developed unevenly, producing a gap between symbolic inclusion and institutional protection. This tension reveals narrative dissonance: queer visibility is incorporated into tourism and heritage imaginaries while structural safeguards remain inconsistent. Such dissonance raises ethical questions about whose identities are amplified, whose vulnerabilities remain obscured, and how tourism design mediates recognition and care. Responding to these concerns, this study reconceptualises LGBTQ+-friendly destination image as an ethical, care-oriented design construct grounded in the Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, and Gender Expression (SOGIE) framework. Rather than treating "friendliness" as branding or event-based inclusion, destination image is positioned as a curated narrative space shaped by power, visibility regimes, and differential vulnerability. In Thailand, where gender diversity has long been selectively incorporated into cultural and heritage representations, tourism narratives may privilege marketable identities while marginalising structurally vulnerable or less visible SOGIE communities whose voices remain underrepresented in shaping tourism products and representations.

Following established scale development procedures, qualitative interviews and expert validation informed item generation, followed by pilot testing and a survey of 654 international tourists who had visited Thailand. Confirmatory factor analysis supported a three-dimensional structure comprising sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression friendliness, demonstrating strong reliability and validity. Findings show that LGBTQ+-friendly destination image significantly predicts tourist satisfaction, word-of-mouth intentions, and revisit intentions. Gender expression friendliness emerged as the strongest predictor across groups, highlighting the importance of visible safety and embodied acceptance in tourism and heritage spaces. Gender identity friendliness exerted a stronger effect among LGBTQ+ respondents, reflecting sensitivity to institutional recognition and structural vulnerability.

Theoretically, this study integrates SOGIE into destination image research and repositions inclusivity as a measurable ethical dimension of tourism design. Practically, the validated scale offers destination organisations an evidence-based tool to assess inclusivity beyond symbolic representation and support more accountable, care-oriented tourism development in Thailand.

## **From Food Tourism to Place Branding in the Pursuit of Sustainability & Resilience**

*Stella Kladou*  
*Hellenic Mediterranean University*  
*Greece*  
[stellakladou@hmu.gr](mailto:stellakladou@hmu.gr)

*Nikolaos Trihas*  
*Georgios Apladas*  
*Eirini Papadaki*  
*Markos Kourgiantakis*

Over the course of time destinations started expressing interest to move beyond mass tourism and towards initiatives labelled as alternative, special interest or niche. Among such initiatives, those prioritizing the gastronomy of destinations also emerged. Scholars commonly explore food and gastronomy in terms of their role for the destination brand, as a negotiation point to redefine place identity and sense of belonging among different residential groups of the same location, or in relation to their export value and contribution to balance of payments. Still, a more inclusive approach to holistically evaluate the contribution of gastronomy to sustainable tourism and places/ destinations appears to be missing. A place branding angle contributes towards this direction by prioritizing the importance of collaboration and co-creation for resilient places.

This study employs a mixed research design to contribute towards this direction: local stakeholders from the agricultural, hospitality, tourism and public sector offer their insights in terms of the importance of food and gastronomy for the Cretan tourism product and identity, whereas international tourists rate the importance of food and gastronomy as pre-travel motives and for their in-situ experience. Findings reveal that the positive impact of gastronomy on the place brand is not necessarily an outcome of visitors' food motive or high involvement with gastronomy to pursue food experiences. In fact, the importance of food culture extends beyond their visit, just like local stakeholders also recognize. In fact, visitors who purchase gastronomic products on their vacation as souvenirs/gifts are half as likely to belong to the category of low-motivated gastrotourists, which highlights the potential of food tourism in promoting a destination's food products. In other words, food tourism can contribute significantly to achieving multiplier benefits in a destination's economy. Building on such potential, the study paves the ground for a more holistic appreciation of food products in place branding and invites stakeholders across different sectors to explore the mutual benefit of a strong synergy in support of sustainability and resilience in times of crisis and beyond.

This conference publication is financed by the Project "Strengthening and optimizing the operation of MODY services and academic and research units of the Hellenic Mediterranean University", funded by the Public Investment Program of the Greek Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs.

## **Human or Artificial? Consumer Preferences for/against AI-Mediated Services in Wine Tourism Settings**

*Stella Kladou*  
*Hellenic Mediterranean University*  
*Greece*  
[stellakladou@hmu.gr](mailto:stellakladou@hmu.gr)

*Kyuho Lee*  
*Ahmet Usakli*

The wine industry is facing intensifying competitive pressures driven by rapid growth in the number of wineries, declining wine consumption, labor shortages, and broader operational challenges. As wineries are highly labor-intensive and rely heavily on customer-facing services such as tasting room experiences, wine club management, and personalized recommendations, reducing labor costs has become a strategic priority. In response, wineries have begun exploring artificial intelligence (AI)-based virtual service agents as substitutes for human labor in both operational and customer service functions. While prior research demonstrates the efficiency and cost advantages of AI-driven service agents, limited attention has been paid to their effectiveness within hedonic consumption contexts such as wine tourism, where emotional engagement, social interaction, and experiential value are central to customer satisfaction.

This study addresses this gap by examining how AI virtual service agents influence consumer satisfaction and loyalty in winery settings, with particular attention to the moderating roles of product type, service context, wine involvement, and service quality. Drawing on theories of hedonic versus utilitarian consumption, the study proposes that consumers' preferences for AI versus human service agents vary. Methodologically, the study employs a scenario-based experimental design using a self-administered online survey. Participants are randomly assigned to experimental conditions.

## **Place, Ecological, and System Literacies: A Community-Driven Framework for Regenerative Tourism in the Arctic**

*Kati Koivunen*  
*Lapland University of Applied Sciences*  
*Finland*  
[kati.koivunen@lapinamk.fi](mailto:kati.koivunen@lapinamk.fi)

*Sanna-Mari Renfors*  
[sanna-mari.renfors@lapinamk.fi](mailto:sanna-mari.renfors@lapinamk.fi)

Arctic tourism development has often been shaped by external models emphasizing growth and consumption, risking a disconnection from local socio-ecological contexts. Such top-down approaches frequently neglect Indigenous values, seasonal rhythms, and local knowledge, leading to unsustainable outcomes in fragile Arctic environments. In response, this paper presents a bottom-up, place-sourced paradigm for regenerative tourism in Arctic regions. We argue that integrating place literacy (knowledge of local culture and environment), ecological literacy (eco-literacy) (awareness of and responsiveness to ecological processes), and system literacy (holistic understanding of socio-ecological systems) offers a novel framework for tourism development that emerges from within places and communities rather than being imposed externally. This represents a conceptual shift that positions local knowledge and ecosystem health as the foundation of tourism innovation in the Arctic North.

Drawing on recent research and community practices from Lapland, we illustrate how an emerging Arctic tourism literacy framework anchors development in the “story of place,” “sense of place,” “care for place,” and “voice of place.” These concepts provide a shared vocabulary for co-creating tourism initiatives that enhance socio-ecological system vitality. Story of place and sense of place capture local narratives, cultural meanings, and emotional bonds between people and land. Care for place and voice of place emphasize active stewardship and the inclusion of local perspectives and rights in decision-making. Together, these literacies ground tourism development in the identities, ecosystems, and heritage of Arctic destinations, linking tourism success to the well-being of communities and nature. Crucially, these literacies are not abstract competencies, but embodied practices rooted in local lifeways and co-created by communities, Indigenous knowledge holders, and the natural environment. Sámi and other local guides enact this as “pedagogues of place,” weaving traditional knowledge, seasonal rhythms, and land-based wisdom into visitor experiences that treat animals, waters, and landscapes as active partners in reciprocal learning.

By adopting this place- and community-informed approach, Arctic tourism can move beyond growth-oriented metrics toward a regenerative ethos grounded in reciprocity, renewal, and situated knowing. The paper contributes a conceptual framework for scholars of regenerative and Arctic tourism theorizing tourism as socio-ecological learning and community-led transformation.

### **Regenerating coastal socio-ecological systems: Applying living systems thinking in tourism product development**

*Kati Koivunen*

*Lapland University of Applied Sciences*

*Finland*

[kati.koivunen@lapinamk.fi](mailto:kati.koivunen@lapinamk.fi)

*Henna Konu*

[henna.konu@uef.fi](mailto:henna.konu@uef.fi)

*Sanna-Mari Renfors*

[sanna-mari.renfors@lapinamk.fi](mailto:sanna-mari.renfors@lapinamk.fi)

*Elli Vento*

Coastal destinations are the major attractions in tourism, but the complex impacts occurring from tourism have become a significant concern for them. As their health depends on interconnections between economy, nature, and society, regenerative tourism has become increasingly important as an alternative to the current methods of developing and managing coastal tourism. It is seen as an opportunity to promote the regenerative capacity and well-being of coastal destinations.

This instrumental case study explores how living systems thinking can be applied in designing place-sourced regenerative tourism products in coastal destinations by considering products as interventions to improve the condition of their socio-ecological systems. The study features two unique tourism products: fishing for the invasive species pink salmon in the River Teno to protect the river ecosystem, and making snow drifts for the endangered Saimaa ringed seal to support its nesting. Both products aim at catalysing processes to regenerate biodiversity. By using living systems thinking as a framework, this study showcases how these products work with the system to thrive and improve the health of the planet, communities, and individuals. As such, this development makes the expression of the essence of the place possible, improves the value of the whole, and grows the capabilities for living systems to support life.

The case study advances understanding of the systemic nature of regenerative tourism products and how to develop these from place, by grounding product development in the distinct ecological and cultural attributes of each destination, and by emphasising the role of place-sourced knowledge, relationships, and locally embedded values. This supports stakeholders in understanding tourism products not as isolated entities, but as part of a larger, dynamic system involving ecological processes, communities, visitors, governance, economies, and cultural values. The study also supports tourism stakeholders in comprehending how ecosystems and societies respond to their actions and helps them to recognise their own role in regenerative tourism development as a potential nexus—one that not only enables the development of tourism products but also fosters community building and interaction among different actors.

### **Sachs' Sustainable Development Theory and Tourism Circuits in Brazil: Conceptual Convergences**

*Ricardo Lemos Pimenta*  
*Anglia Ruskin University*  
*United Kingdom*  
[ricardo.lemos-pimenta@aru.ac.uk](mailto:ricardo.lemos-pimenta@aru.ac.uk)

Tourism destinations increasingly rely on place-based governance arrangements to translate sustainability principles into actionable regional development, particularly in contexts marked by uncertainty and intersecting social, environmental and economic pressures. This paper develops a conceptual analysis of Minas Gerais' certified tourism circuits (Brazil)—associative arrangements that bring together public authorities, private organisations and civil society under the national tourism regionalisation programme. Building on Sachs' multidimensional sustainable development framework (social, environmental, territorial, economic and political), the study examines whether and how the governance logic of tourism circuits converges with sustainability pillars that support locally grounded responses to global change. Methodologically, the paper is based on a critical literature review, organised through a Honeycomb methodology to ensure transparency and analytical coherence: (1) research philosophy and stance; (2) logic of enquiry; (3) research strategy (critical review); (4) evidence base and selection protocol; (5) critical appraisal and synthesis procedure; and (6) trustworthiness and robustness checks. The analysis indicates strong conceptual convergence: tourism circuits institutionalise multi-actor participation, territorial coordination and policy integration mechanisms that can enable balanced outcomes across Sachs' pillars. The paper contributes by reframing tourism circuits as governance infrastructure for sustainable territorial development, clarifying the mechanisms through which regionalisation policy can enhance legitimacy, coordination and collective capacity at the destination level. Implications are offered for policymakers and destination managers seeking scalable collaborative designs that support inclusive, long-term place-based sustainability.

### **Shaping Place through Food: Culinary Tourism and Urban Transformation**

*Qingli Lin*  
*University of Leeds*  
*United Kingdom*  
[cnql@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:cnql@leeds.ac.uk)

Urban centers are increasingly facing challenges with the sustainability of their food-related landscapes due to rapid urbanization and shifts in economic priorities that favor commercial development over the preservation of traditional food cultures. In China, the crisis of street

food culture and traditional wet-market ecologies is particularly visible, as once-vibrant spaces lose social centrality, affordability, and everyday relevance. This paper investigates whether, and under what conditions, culinary tourism can contribute to the revitalisation of urban foodscapes while supporting broader processes of urban regeneration. Focusing on Kexiang District in Nanjing, the study critically examines how tourism-oriented food practices intersect with spatial restructuring, economic resilience, and cultural identity in a transforming inner-city neighbourhood.

The research adopts a mixed-methods design combining spatial analysis with qualitative and quantitative inquiry. Spatial analysis examines the distribution and clustering of food-related activities and the changing patterns of movement and use within the district. Semi-structured interviews with key stakeholder groups, including residents, tourists, and urban experts, explore lived experiences of change, perceived shifts in place quality and meaning, and the governance dynamics shaping regeneration outcomes. Structured surveys complement these insights by assessing satisfaction, social vitality, and the perceived balance between everyday liveability and visitor-oriented consumption.

The study is expected to show how culinary tourism may generate urban benefits such as increased footfall, more active public spaces, and renewed cultural visibility. At the same time, it is likely to reveal tensions around commercialisation, crowding, and unevenly distributed gains. By foregrounding the interaction between culinary practices, spatial change, and stakeholder experience, the findings aim to inform planners and policymakers on how culinary tourism can be integrated into place-based regeneration strategies while protecting the everyday functions and social fabric of local foodscapes.

## **How relocating food feeds just tourism: Social solidarity efforts in Costa Rica**

*Mary Little*

*School for Field Studies*

*Costa Rica*

[mlittle@fieldstudies.org](mailto:mlittle@fieldstudies.org)

My doctoral thesis on social solidarity food initiatives in Monteverde, Costa Rica, serves as the basis for my proposed panel contribution to the ATLAS Annual Conference. I hope to share the findings of my research on community-based circular food initiatives to confront food insecurity and tourism dependence during and after Covid-19. I will highlight how these practices are emerging to foster localized food-sovereignty collaboration.

I draw on social solidarity and circular economy (SSCE) frameworks to conduct a critical analysis of how food sovereignty efforts intersect with the “local turn” in tourism. Community-led localized food production and distribution embody Higgins-Desbiolles and Bigby’s argument that “local communities” encompass people, ecologies, and past and future generations. This study examines how Monteverde residents have developed responses to deeply disruptive tourism crises, with community, land, more-than-human beings, and residents’ needs considered in co-creation. The paper shows how food commons and social solidarity economies provide concrete pathways to localize tourism by reclaiming food as a commons and recentering community priorities in tourism development discussions.

Theoretically, this paper advances just and post-capitalist tourism debates by demonstrating how locally rooted food commons and solidarity economies act as everyday resistance, localizing tourism by recentering community control over land, labor, and value.

I’ve used a mixed-methods, community-based participatory case study that combines surveys, semi-structured interviews, and focus groups with key food and tourism actors. It analyzes five food initiatives selected for their COVID-era emergence or expansion, explicit focus on food access and local economic circulation, and community recognition as important collaboration spaces: the Monteverde community garden, the farmer-to-farmer agroecology program Aprovechando Nuestra Finca, the Verdes complementary community currency, the Mercadito Verde market, and Hecho en Monteverde, a local origin certification.

Combining 5 survey instruments, semi-structured interviews with project participants, and focus groups with key food and tourism actors provides a varied and inclusive selection of data to more deeply understand the process and impacts of localized food strategies. These five initiatives were analyzed through thematic coding linking participants' narratives and practices to food sovereignty, social solidarity circular economy, and just tourism lenses. This ongoing research follows the challenges and adaptation of these initiatives as tourism has returned.

Together these initiatives contest extractive tourism logics by diverting tourist-generated value into locally governed food systems by shortening supply chains and prioritizing residents' nutritional needs and livelihoods over visitor consumption and corporate profit. These are active, co-created assemblies of working groups, and everyday collaborations among producers and civil society organizations that are collectively negotiating how to confront entrenched power asymmetries between tourists and local residents.

### **Desired futures in tourist-oriented rural areas in Croatia: a scenario-based approach**

*Aleksandar Lukic*  
*University of Zagreb*  
*Croatia*  
[alukic@geog.pmf.hr](mailto:alukic@geog.pmf.hr)

*Petra Radeljak Kaufmann*

Envisioning alternative futures for rural areas, and the roles that tourism could play in their development, may have beneficial effects on raising awareness of the nature of collective problems and potential solutions. The scenario method is one approach used to portray possible futures, stimulate open discussion, and inform social choices. The aim of this paper is recognizing factors that may empower or hinder resilient and sustainable rural communities, particularly in tourism-oriented areas of Croatia in the near future. In 2017 scenarios for Croatian rural futures up to 2030 were developed using both quantitative and qualitative methods and revisited after the halfway point in 2025. Firstly, in-depth, semi-structured interviews and a questionnaire survey were conducted with stakeholders (local government units, LEADER local action groups, cooperatives) to explore key drivers and uncertainties. Scenarios were then developed using the results of multivariate analysis (factor and cluster analysis), through which 15 variables were identified as key for the development of rural areas, and six types of rural areas in Croatia were subsequently identified. Next, two rounds of a Delphi study were conducted with an interdisciplinary panel of 37 academics with rural expertise. Eventually, four explorative scenarios were created: Rural Renaissance, Shift, Road to Nowhere, and Growth without Development. In 2025, a new round of the Delphi study was conducted to evaluate the scenarios after the halfway point. Each scenario was analysed using the Good Countryside model developed by Shucksmith (2016), applying Amin's (2006) four registers of social solidarity (Repair, Relatedness, Rights, and Re-enchantment). Some empowering factors recognized for successful and resilient rural communities were: 1. Promoting local voices at the forefront of the development agenda; 2. Achieving a decision-making process related to endogenous resources that is harmonised through dialogue and cooperation between the state, region, and local community; 3. Networking of local actors through cooperatives, clusters, producer organisations, and other types of organisations, enabling more efficient and competitive access to the market; 4. Offering a diversity of job opportunities in a multisector economy and, particularly in tourism-oriented areas, integration of agriculture and tourism and supporting development of various selective forms of tourism.

## Co-Designing regenerative tourism in the Brecks

*Nikki MacLeod*  
*University of Greenwich*  
*United Kingdom*  
[n.e.macleod@greenwich.ac.uk](mailto:n.e.macleod@greenwich.ac.uk)

*Wenjie Cai*  
*Isabella Qing Ye*  
*Hai Nguyen*

Regenerative tourism calls for a fundamental rethinking of tourism's purpose, shifting from a focus on minimising harm to fostering co-evolutionary relationships between socio-cultural and ecological systems (Liburd & Duedahl, 2025). Rather than sustaining the status quo, regeneration seeks to restore, renew, and enhance the conditions that allow both human and more-than-human communities to flourish. This project develops and tests a practical regenerative tourism framework for the Brecks National Character Area (Breckland) in East Anglia, a distinctive chalk and sandy landscape (Natural England, 2015) with the ambition to become the UK's first Regenerative Tourism National Character Area.

The study adopts a Participatory Action Research (PAR) approach grounded in a pluralist epistemology, recognising multiple ways of knowing and valuing place (Liburd, Duedahl & Heape, 2022). Rather than imposing a fixed model, the research co-produces an evolving, theory-informed framework with local stakeholders, including SMEs, land stewards, and community groups. The framework is both analytical and practical: it shapes data collection and is simultaneously reshaped through iterative cycles of engagement.

The initial "alpha" scaffold synthesises the Tourism Tree metaphor (Becken & Kaur, 2022), living systems thinking (Bellato et al., 2022), and regenerative practice principles (Dredge, 2022). It proposes three interrelated dimensions: Roots, which anchor tourism in place-based identity, values, and ecological awareness; a Trunk, which reconfigures fragmented sectors into collaborative and reciprocal roles; and a Crown, which aligns economic activity with ecological restoration and diverse forms of wellbeing.

Empirically, the study proceeds through stakeholder scoping, a baseline survey, co-design workshops, and in-depth case studies. The project is currently in early data collection. By examining how the Roots–Trunk–Crown structure evolves when confronted with destination realities, the research contributes to debates on regenerative justice and shared responsibility in tourism governance (Rastegar, 2025), demonstrating how regenerative theory can be operationalised within a specific place context while offering a transferable model for other destinations.

## Reimagining Event Impact through Co-Created Urban Practices

*Sarah Maes*  
*Karel de Grote Hogeschool of Applied Sciences*  
*Belgium*  
[sarah.maes@kdq.be](mailto:sarah.maes@kdq.be)

*Yana Avramova*  
[yana.avramova@kdq.be](mailto:yana.avramova@kdq.be)

Cities increasingly mobilise events as spaces for connection, creativity, and collective experience. While cities and municipalities recognise the importance of understanding and enhancing the social impact of events, they face significant practical barriers in doing so. Time constraints, limited expertise, fragmented data, and a lack of shared evaluation frameworks hinder systematic reflection and decision-making. As a result, the strategic

planning and assessment of event impact remain inconsistently embedded in local governments' practices. Dominant evaluation frameworks and planning tools have provided useful conceptual lenses, but in practice they often prioritise instrumental aspects of events and place substantial demands on time, data, and evaluative expertise. Consequently, affective and relational dimensions of visitor experience, as well as residents' lived experiences, receive less attention. Ongoing debates in event and tourism studies call for more participatory and practice-oriented approaches that foreground lived experience, collaboration, and learning (Ziakas & Getz, 2021). This paper presents insights from an ongoing research project (2025-2026) on the social impact of urban events in Flanders (Belgium). Rather than proposing a fixed evaluative framework, the project explores how social impact is currently understood, measured, and negotiated within cities and municipalities, and how co-creative processes can facilitate reflection and shared learning in event governance. The study adopts a mixed-methods, participatory design, combining expert interviews and interviews with city and municipal event coordinators with a large-scale survey and co-creative workshops with local government event practitioners. The latter were conducted in collaboration with the Association of Flemish Cities and Municipalities and focused on current approaches and challenges in data collection and impact measurement, and the exchange of emerging practices. Finally, surveys and focus groups in two pilot cities examine residents' and event visitors' experiences. Preliminary insights indicate that, while municipalities recognise the importance of social impact, evaluation practices remain fragmented and are often shaped by intuition, resource constraints, and limited opportunities for collective learning. Data from the ongoing surveys and focus groups with residents and event visitors will be analysed in relation to these findings and are intended to support local governments in developing more meaningful, community-oriented event experiences and reflecting on their social impact.

### **Co-creating Resistance to Overtourism: Participatory Filmmaking with Local Associations in the Cinque Terre and Venice**

*Nicola Mai*  
*University of Leicester*  
*United Kingdom*  
[nick.mai@leicester.ac.uk](mailto:nick.mai@leicester.ac.uk)

This presentation draws on two longitudinal participatory filmmaking projects, Sciacchetraill and Vie di Fuga (Escape Routes), developed since 2023 with grassroots organisations in the Cinque Terre (Liguria) and Venice. Situated within intersecting crises of climate change, rising inequalities, touristification, and growing disenchantment with local governance, the projects examine how heterogeneous local communities mobilise sporting associations and events to push back against the socio-ecological pressures of mass tourism while renegotiating what "community" means in highly commodified destinations.

In line with the conference theme, rather than assuming cohesive local identities, the two co-creative filmmaking processes document how communities experience tourism-induced change unevenly along lines of class, gender, and differential access to the political capital enabling some actors to benefit from touristification while others absorb its costs.

Sciacchetraill follows a community-organised international trail running event across the terraced vineyards of the Cinque Terre, placing it within wider struggles over land maintenance, agricultural (vineyards) labour, and the preservation of a fragile UNESCO-listed cultural landscape under intensifying visitor flows. Footage collected since 2023 juxtaposes the commodification of seaside villages driven by platform rentals and cruise-led tourism with local attempts to defend and renew an existential, ancestral relation to a steep, terraced territory that has shaped social life and culture for centuries.

Vie di Fuga focuses on a women-led sport association in Venice that reclaims women's right to mobility by training them to use traditional small motorboats to navigate the city's

labyrinthine waterways. The Fie a Manetta collective celebrates the deep connection between city, canals, and lagoon, experienced as “escape routes” from tourist congestion. The film shows how this initiative forms part of a wider ecology of activist practices and community-led cultural events contesting the tourist-led commodification of Venice while nurturing more intimate forms of sociability among residents.

The projects document intangible losses linked to overtourism, including experiences of solastalgia and loss of social cohesion, alongside practices of resistance, care, and reappropriation of place. Currently in co-creative post-production, the films both document and sustain local attempts to reclaim narrative agency and experiment with alternative ways of inhabiting and governing territories reshaped by multiple, intersecting crises.

## **Creative Tourism and Counteracting Right-Wing Activism: Insights from the European Capital of Culture, Chemnitz**

*Robin Marlow*  
*Trier University*  
*Germany*  
[marlow@uni-trier.de](mailto:marlow@uni-trier.de)

The EU funded programme European Capital of Culture (ECoC) aims at boosting tourism in places that seem not fully to realise their touristic potential.

The East German city of Chemnitz (Saxony, 250.000 inhabitants) is, according to many of its inhabitants, peripheral. In 2020, it won the competition over the ECoC title for 2025. The jury did not only acknowledge the rich cultural and subcultural offerings of the city but also stressed the importance of tackling the societal turmoil that the city was going through after it had shown its concerning side in the racist right-wing protests and escalations in 2018 that had been backed by many inhabitants.

The ECoC Chemnitz tried to overcome the political unease by offering people opportunities for interpersonal exchange. In 1989, Ray Oldenburg coined the term “third space” for a place at which people could gather in their free time. Currently, similar concepts are proposed in German academia, for example “Soziale Orte” (Kersten/Neu/Vogel 2022). The ECoC Chemnitz expanded this idea by proposing small events for people to come together and be productive, creative and communicative. One would consider this kind of programme especially interesting for creative tourists. In my PhD thesis, I investigate whether this creative tourism approach is effective in promoting democratic engagement and participation to counteract right-wing activism.

In my presentation, I will share my findings based on one specific project within the ECoC Chemnitz. I will talk about the Kiosk des Unwissens (kiosk of not-knowing), which was an artistic intervention in a rather peripheral and stigmatised residential area within the city. For three weeks, residents and visitors were invited to use public space for coming together and taking part in workshops. In my talk, I will share the insights gained from my participant observation and illustrate broader issues addressed during the fieldwork for my PhD thesis.

## **Experience and identity in the Brazilian Carnival**

*Lenia Marques*  
Erasmus University Rotterdam  
Netherlands  
[marques@eshcc.eur.nl](mailto:marques@eshcc.eur.nl)

*Greg Richards*  
[richardstourism@gmail.com](mailto:richardstourism@gmail.com)

*Vinícius R. A. Teixeira*

Carnival is one of the biggest events – if not the biggest – in the world. Deeply rooted in the Brazilian culture, Carnival is probably one of the most complex and rich systems of the Brazilian cultural economy, involving chains of cultural production, both grassroots and commercial.

Carnival is produced and consumed, and often co-created, having a strong economic but also social and cultural dimension. Much has been said about the symbolic and identitarian meaning of such event, however there is a gap on understanding how the dimensions of the experience relate to identity aspects, such as memory, habit of participation and gender. This paper proposes to investigate experience and identity by reporting on the ATLAS ongoing Carnival project. Within the over 10 years of longitudinal data, the paper will be covering the post-pandemic period of 2023-2025. The paper will use a longitudinal quantitative approach (1553 responses), focusing on the exploration of the dimensions of the Event Experience Scale (EES) and their relationship to elements such as group membership (to the so-called “blocos”), years of participation, gender and open comments related to identity, symbolic meaning and memory.

## **Climate Change, Normalized Crisis, and the Limits of Adaptive Governance in Jamaica’s Tourism Sector**

*Glenville Mcleod*  
University of the West Indies  
Jamaica  
[glenville.mcleod@uwi.edu](mailto:glenville.mcleod@uwi.edu)

As hurricanes become more frequent and intense in the Caribbean, the need for robust environmental governance systems is even more urgent. In Jamaica, where tourism is a central pillar of economic growth and foreign exchange earnings, repeated hurricanes expose structural weaknesses in environmental governance. Jamaica’s environmental governance system, particularly in relation to the tourism sector, focuses on episodic emergencies rather than continuous climate risk management. This article examines how the increasing normalization of hurricanes in Jamaica exposes a structural misalignment between disaster governance and tourism governance. It reveals an environmental governance system heavily designed for episodic emergencies rather than sustained climate adaptation. Drawing on policy analysis, post-hurricane development, and governance frameworks, I argue that tourism governance and disaster governance operate in parallel rather than as an integrated system. Rather than embedding climate risk into tourism planning, governance practices prioritize the rapid restoration of economic activity, which often reproduces vulnerability. Using an adaptive governance model, I show that Jamaica’s environmental governance systems lack adaptive capacity, meaning institutions fail to coordinate mechanisms fast enough to match climate realities.

The Jamaican case illustrates a broader challenge facing Small Island Developing States (SIDS), namely that climate governance systems are designed for rare shocks and

increasingly misaligned with recurring environmental issues. This research forces us to assess the need for institutional integration across tourism, environmental regulation, and disaster risk management to avoid a cycle of reactive recovery that undermines long-term climate adaptation in SIDS.

### **Investigating Tourism Impacts in a Medium-sized City Context – A Framework for Analysis. The Case of Trier, Germany**

*Michael Miessner*  
Trier University  
Germany  
[miessner@uni-trier.de](mailto:miessner@uni-trier.de)

*Fabian Frenzel*  
[fabian.frenzel@uni-trier.de](mailto:fabian.frenzel@uni-trier.de)

Measuring tourism and its impact on a destination is complex. Most existing approaches take different ways of approximating the value of tourism receipts, tourist expenditure and tourist numbers. While sometimes solid numbers can be obtained, for example via the registration and taxation of overnight stays, most assessments are based on surveys from which quantities are extrapolated. Such surveys provide solid information mostly about trends and tendencies, i.e. their validity is particularly high in the reflection on increases or decreases of numbers over time. Further data, with regards to multiplier effects, and overall value generated, follows generic sets of assumptions which are rarely tested to specific local conditions. More complex yet, the assessment of day tourists is another challenge, starting from the difficulties of defining them, to the actual measurements of numbers.

At the same time, focusing solely on quantitative data limits the ability to fully understand the actual impacts of tourism. Qualitative assessments of tourism are crucial component of any holistic understanding of tourism's impact, yet they bring their own challenges. We present a framework that aims to combine different data sources, big and statistical data, surveys, interviews and observation, to develop a holistic approach to the assessment of tourism impact. This includes study areas tangential to but potentially affected by tourism, including the housing market, retail businesses in the city and transport infrastructures, among others. By combining various quantitative and qualitative research approaches a wide range of data sources within a specific local context can be harnessed and support a holistic analysis of tourism impacts in a medium-sized city context. Creating a framework, the paper aims to contribute a possible avenue for research, that is also adaptable to other places.

### **A Multi-Generational Lens on the Pet-Friendly Hotel Experience**

*Nadja Mlakar*  
University of Maribor  
Slovenia  
[nadja.mlakar1@um.si](mailto:nadja.mlakar1@um.si)

*Mihaela Franjić*  
[mihaela.franjic1@um.si](mailto:mihaela.franjic1@um.si)

Companion animals, particularly dogs, occupy an increasingly central place in contemporary human lives, challenging anthropocentric tourism practices and reshaping human–animal relations within hospitality settings. As dogs are progressively framed not merely as pets but as equal family members and travel companions, tourism spaces become sites of interspecies co-existence, negotiation, and also ethical responsibility. Pet-friendly

accommodations thus represent a key arena in which animal agency, anthropomorphism, and co-creation with animals are enacted in practice, revealing how tourism both reflects and shapes evolving human–animal bonds.

This study explores how different generations of tourists (Baby Boomers, Generation X, Millennials, and Generation Z) experience co-existing with dogs in pet-friendly hotels. The questionnaire measures multiple segments of the pet-friendly accommodation experience, including thoughts on acceptance policies, service quality, hygiene and safety, spatial design, staff attitudes, additional services, and perceived price–value relationships. By applying a generational lens, the study contributes to understanding differences among Slovenian dog owners and manifestations of anthropomorphism in tourism. We assume that younger generations, often socialised in contexts of heightened animal ethics and strong emotional attachment to companion animals, may conceptualise dogs as co-creators of the tourism experience and expect inclusive, dog-centred services with fewer spatial or behavioural restrictions. Older generations, while also valuing companion animals—frequently as substitutes for children who have already left home—may prioritise clearer boundaries, formal rules, and functional coexistence with other guests. Examining these differences allows for a deeper analysis of how human interests and ontologies of “the animal Other” intersect with tourism practices in accommodation settings. The findings aim to contribute to interdisciplinary debates on human–animal relations in tourism by grounding experiences in everyday pet-friendly accommodation practices. Through comparative analysis across generational cohorts, the study identifies both differences and similarities in expectations, values, and perceptions of co-existing with dogs while travelling. The research offers guidance for pet-friendly accommodation providers by highlighting which attributes and services resonate most strongly with specific generations of dog owners, supporting the development of differentiated, ethically sensitive pet-friendly strategies that address diverse generational expectations.

## **Imagining Futures of Winter tourism through Collaborative Scenarios & Design Fiction**

*Jan Mosedale*  
*University of Applied Sciences of the Grisons*  
*Switzerland*  
[jan.mosedale@fhgr.ch](mailto:jan.mosedale@fhgr.ch)

*Emmanuelle George*

Alpine winter destinations are facing uncertainty as climate change and changing visitor expectations put long-established tourism models under pressure (Hetzenauer et al., 2022). Although there is ample scientific evidence showing declining snow reliability (c.f. Steiger et al. 2024), many destinations struggle to turn this knowledge into shared strategic direction or coordinated action. This paper builds on insights from the Interreg Alpine Space project TranStat to explore how collaborative futures approaches can help destinations make sense of and respond to these uncertainties.

The focus lies on the combination of participatory scenario development (Shaw et al., 2009) and design fiction (Bleecker, 2022) as a method for co-creation among diverse actors, including residents, second homeowners, the DMO and the private-sector. Instead of using scenarios as technical planning tools, the project experimented with narrative futures that embed structural trends into place-based stories of everyday life and work. These future fictions were co-created in facilitated workshops and used to stimulate dialogue, surface conflicting values, and explore alternative development pathways beyond snow-dependent tourism.

The paper examines how narrative and imaginative formats can lower barriers to engagement, enable emotional and experiential understanding of long-term change, and

foster a sense of shared ownership of transformation processes. It also critically reflects on challenges encountered, including unequal participation, power asymmetries in co-creation, and the risk that coherent narratives may oversimplify contested futures.

## **Memefication and Dissonance: The Case of Black Travel and Civil Rights Tourism in Montgomery**

*Rasul Mowatt*  
*North Carolina State University*  
*United States*  
[rasul\\_mowatt@ncsu.edu](mailto:rasul_mowatt@ncsu.edu)

*Tynesha McCullers*  
[tmccull2@ncsu.edu](mailto:tmccull2@ncsu.edu)

The Montgomery Brawl of August 5, 2023, quickly became a viral moment, capturing public attention through firsthand accounts, memes, and media discourse. Sparked by an altercation between the Black co-captain of the Harriott II cruise ship and a group of White boat owners refusing to move their vessel, the incident unfolded as an act of resistance that resonated deeply within Black digital communities. Social media users framed the event through memes and commentary, drawing from Black rhetorical traditions, historical resistance, and contemporary sociopolitical movements.

While in the backdrop of the city, the work and spaces of the Equal Justice Initiative (EJI), inclusive of the National Memorial for Peace and Justice, the Legacy Museum, Freedom Park, and the newest addition, the Elevation Convention and Hotel, continues to broaden its geographical footprint onto the city. Other historically significant Civil Right tourism sites, such as the central bus stop related the Montgomery Bus Boycott and the stairs upon which in which George Wallace gave his famous “segregation forever!” speech stand juxtaposed to the scores of Confederate Memorials lining the streets of Montgomery. What is called into question are the ways in which history is obscured, flattened, or forgotten by actors that often articulate a favorable perspective with the diversification of cultural travel.

This presentation is based on the examination of the mediated memefication of the Montgomery Brawl and socio-political dissonance of the EJI sites as they are situated within the geographic and historical context of Montgomery. Through a review of archival materials, including newspapers, maps, and city documents; critical technocultural discourse analysis of social media platforms, like TikTok, Instagram, and Twitter; and field observations of the city, the historical power dynamics embedded in the site itself was traced. By synthesizing historical, digital, and spatial perspectives, a clearer picture of the intersection of geography, power, and media (re)shaping narratives of Black resistance and laundering Black rage can be gained.

## **Remembering Bhopal: Tourism and Ongoing Injustice**

*Rajesh Nautiyal*  
*University of Lincoln*  
*United Kingdom*  
[rnautiyal@lincoln.ac.uk](mailto:rnautiyal@lincoln.ac.uk)

The Bhopal disaster is an excellent example of what Nixon (2011) conceptualises as ‘slow violence’, a temporally extended form of environmental harm that unfolds across generations through toxic exposure, contaminated landscapes, and unresolved legal redress. Despite this ongoing material and social aftermath, governance of the former Union Carbide pesticide plant site has largely been framed through discourses of hazard management,

urban order, and heritage containment. This paper argues that such regulatory practices operate not merely as neutral safety measures but as forms of spatial governance that circumscribe public memory and political accountability. Drawing implicitly on Foucauldian notions of biopolitics, site access restrictions can be read as techniques through which visibility, circulation, and narrative authority are managed, thereby limiting the extent to which the landscape functions as a living archive of corporate and state failure. At the same time, mainstream dark tourism scholarship has often privileged the visual and affective consumption of sites of death and disaster (Sather-Wagstaff, 2015), sometimes marginalising the political agency of affected communities. In Bhopal, where health impacts, groundwater contamination, and compensation disputes remain unresolved, the ethical stakes of such aestheticisation are particularly acute. Building on justice-oriented tourism theory (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2008) and post-disaster advocacy (Fortun, 2009), this study proposes a solidarity-based model of engagement grounded in survivor consent, co-curation, and restorative justice principles. Rather than positioning the site as a static memorial or commodified ruin, this framework reconceptualises it as a platform for transnational advocacy, where tourism practices can amplify survivor-led demands for remediation and accountability. In doing so, the paper reframes tourism not as passive consumption of tragedy but as a potential mechanism for political mobilisation within contexts of protracted environmental injustice.

### **Participation, power, and tourism in the Vlach community of Kato Vermio (Seli), Greece**

*Stefania Ntregka*  
*Hotelschool The Hague*  
*Netherlands*  
[s.ntregka@hotelschool.nl](mailto:s.ntregka@hotelschool.nl)

*Christina Papagianouli*

This paper presents an ongoing exploratory case study of the Vlach community of Kato Vermio (Seli), examining participatory practices around community-led cultural events that aim to maintain an endangered cultural identity and language while engaging with tourism development. These cultural performances take place at different moments throughout the year, functioning as dispersed, community-led efforts to sustain visibility and attract visitors to a seasonally inhabited village. Positioned within conditions of socio-economic and demographic uncertainty, including depopulation, seasonality, ageing, and cultural commodification, the study explores how power relations shape collaboration and inclusion in tourism-related cultural practices.

The research adopts an exploratory qualitative approach, combining semi-structured interviews with cultural association members, younger and older community participants, and local authorities, alongside participant observation of events, planning processes and analysis of programs and municipal decisions. A community participation perspective guides the analysis, focusing on whose voices, identities, and interests are included or marginalised in the organisation and representation of Vlach cultural events that act as a tourism incentive.

Conceptually, the study approaches tourism as a performative process through which identity is negotiated, rather than as a purely economic activity. Cultural events are examined as performances that structure participation and distribute power through increasing visibility and audience formation. Within these practices, tensions emerge around the participation of younger generations and the use of the Vlach language, which are frequently framed by organizers as key to reconnecting community members with place and to sustaining cultural identity over time. Particular attention is given to internal power imbalances within local cultural associations and to asymmetries between the Vlach

community and external institutions and/or tourism actors. While Kato Vermio is locally recognised as an anchor for Vlach cultural reproduction, coordination has become increasingly challenging as interests are conflicted and younger generations move away. By focusing on participation and performance, the paper contributes to debates on inclusive tourism futures, highlighting how community empowerment and collaboration are contested under conditions of uncertainty.

### **Exploring Power Dynamics in Community-Governed Tourism Conservancies in Kenya using Political Ecology as Analytical Framework**

*Edwin Obombo Magio*  
*Leeds Beckett University*  
*United Kingdom*  
[e.magio3827@student.leedsbeckett.ac.uk](mailto:e.magio3827@student.leedsbeckett.ac.uk)

Community-governed tourism conservancies have increasingly been promoted as a governance model for protected areas. However, there remains a limited understanding of the power dynamics at play. Drawing on political ecology, this study explores these dynamics using a case study of Il Ngwesi Conservancy in Laikipia, Kenya. Data was generated from qualitative methods, including in-depth interviews and non-participant observation. Additionally, document analysis of meeting minutes, conservancy documents, and records were conducted. The study respondents included community members, leaders, and representatives from neighboring private conservancies (Lewa and Borana), the Northern Rangelands Trust and Kenya Wildlife Service. Purposeful and snowball sampling techniques were used to select participants, and thematic analysis was applied to analyze the verbal data. The findings reveal challenges in participation and power imbalances. The study recommends adopting inclusive practices to enhance the management of conservancies, not only in Kenya but also in other similar contexts. This research contributes valuable insights into debates, practices, and policy development related to community-governed tourism conservancies as a governance mechanism for protected areas.

### **Systems Thinking Perspective on Sub-national Tourism Governance in Emerging Economies**

*Paulina Onyeka*  
*University of Derby*  
*United Kingdom*  
[p.onyeka@derby.ac.uk](mailto:p.onyeka@derby.ac.uk)

*Eleni Michopoulou*  
*Faith Samkange*

The need for deeper focus on governance in tourism development research, especially in emerging economies of the Global South, has been widely acknowledged (Dredge, Jenkins & Whitford, 2011; Adu-Ampong, 2018; Wondirad, Ma & Tolkach, 2024; Guo & Li, 2025), yet sub-national governance remains underexplored. This paper addresses this gap by examining sub-national tourism governance in Nigeria (Oyeyemi, 2021), by adopting systems thinking perspective to understand how power, roles and collaboration shape tourism development during periods of change.

The data was generated through face-to-face interviews with decision-makers and focus group discussions with operational level staff at the tourism ministry in Imo State. Drawing on qualitative interviews, this study explores the institutional structures, governmental roles and collaborations through systems thinking perspective by Arnold and Wade (2015).

Tourism development is conceptualised as a complex multi-component system shaped by interdependent social relations (Williams, Hall, & Lew, 2004). Within this system, governmental structures are understood as the “element”, their roles as the “purpose”, and collaborations as the “interconnection” (Arnold & Wade, 2015).

The findings reveal a structured yet highly centralised, top-down governance system, especially at sub-national level, where policy formulation and strategic decision-making are dominated by a limited group of stakeholders. Whilst intergovernmental relationships are perceived as good, supportive and effective, policy formulation and planning processes are strongly shaped by inherited national frameworks and short-term cycles aligned with political tenures, constraining continuity and long-term learning. Although engagement with industry and communities exists formally, stakeholder participation is largely consultative rather than collaborative and co-creative. Furthermore, the absence of shared criteria for policy and strategy effectiveness evaluation limits institutional and adaptive learning.

Despite stakeholder contentment with existing arrangements, the systems analysis indicates that collaboration functions as a procedural requirement rather than a mechanism for power redistribution or transformative change. As a result, tourism development operates as a managed rather than an adaptive or transformative system. This study demonstrates how entrenched governance configurations constrain collaboration, co-creation, and system’s adaptability. The paper contributes to tourism governance scholarship by illustrating the value of systems thinking for identifying leverage points for more participatory and resilient tourism futures in emerging economies.

## **Exploring the Motivation behind Silver Tourist Repeat Visits and Meaning Attached to Place**

*Sandra Osigwe*  
*Sheffield Hallam University*  
*United Kingdom*  
[sandraosigwe@gmail.com](mailto:sandraosigwe@gmail.com)

Population ageing has emerged as a significant area in tourism research, owing to increased travel behaviour and the economic influence on the tourist industry (Otoo & Kim, 2018). The expanding concept of ageing and life expectancy has made older tourists more actively engaged in travel behaviours driven by meaning and diverse needs, which support healthy ageing in later life (Li & Chan, 2021; Xiang & Qiao, 2023). According to a report from the United Nations (2024) on global ageing issues, the ageing population for older tourists is anticipated to continue to rise between 50 to 60 years, peaking at roughly 10.3 billion in the mid-2080s, then gradually dropping to 10.2 billion in 2100, which shows a significant decline in population ageing. This demographic shift could bring a wide challenge in global economies, pressure on tourism industry, increase in demand for personalised and more emotionally sensitive experiences in travel behaviour.

However, ageing has been defined as a progression of loss characterised by vulnerability, impairments, decreased physical activity, grief, social isolation and increased behavioural and social limits (Chang et al., 2025; Huber et al., 2019; Patterson & Balderas-Cejudo, 2023). These progressions may lead to loneliness, anxiety and an increased need for emotionally meaningful experiences in their travel behaviour which represent more than novelty and escapism (Chen & Kuok, 2024). Recent research argues that leisure has transcended beyond motivation into a deeper understanding of the meaning associated with repeat visitation (Clarke & Bowen, 2021; Fan et al., 2024). However, repeat visitation has been linked to autonomy, relatedness and competence, which enhances psychological wellbeing through effects such as feelings of belongingness and comfort (Vada et al., 2023). While much of the research has focused on motivation and factors influencing repeat visitation, little has been known about the emotional need behind repeat visitation, most especially among older adults (Chen & Xiao, 2013; Tan, 2017; Vada et al., 2023).

By focusing on repeat visitation among older tourists, this study explores the emotional experience behind older adult repeat visitation to the same destination and its contribution to their healthy ageing, which may critique the emerging research on emotional numbness in repeat visitation (Su et al., 2025). This study focuses on older tourists between 50 and above because they reflect a larger percentage of an active ageing group, which marks the onset of a distinctive demographic shift characterised by varying needs, emotions, meaning and leisure behaviour (Fan et al., 2024). Therefore, this study draws on socio-emotional selective theory as a sensitising concept alongside PERMA theory, which critiques that individuals who sense limitations of time prioritise meaningful experiences, fostering beneficial social interaction that helps maintain their well-being through positive emotions (Carstensen et al., 1999; Seligman, 2011). Methodologically, based on the research question and aims, this study would adopt an interpretive paradigm, which recognises that older tourists are a heterogeneous demography with different behaviours which cannot be viewed from a single reality (Crotty, 1998). This study is therefore exploratory in nature, which involves a semi-structured biographical interview and photo elicitation of 20 older tourists who frequently visit Castleton through purposive and convenience sampling. By analysing their narratives, this study may contribute to a deeper understanding of repeat visitation among older tourists which promotes more inclusive and emotionally sensitive tourism practices which suit the preferences and needs of older tourists.

## **Urban Tourism in Transition: Exploring Postgrowth Policy Approaches in London**

*Ilaria Pappalepore*

*University of Westminster*

*United Kingdom*

[i.pappalepore@westminster.ac.uk](mailto:i.pappalepore@westminster.ac.uk)

*Cristina Maxim*

This paper presents the results of ongoing research undertaken in London as part of a broader comparative project examining transitions in urban tourism policy across several European cities, including Amsterdam, Venice, Copenhagen, Barcelona, Edinburgh, Athens, and others. The project is coordinated through the ATLAS Urban Tourism Special Interest Group. Focusing on the London case, this paper will explore how emerging transformative paradigms, including degrowth, postgrowth, and regenerative tourism, are reflected within urban tourism policy in the UK capital. As a global city characterised by intense tourism-related mobilities alongside ambitious climate and sustainability targets, London provides a valuable setting to investigate the delicate balance between growth-oriented policy agendas, environmental commitments, and concerns for resident wellbeing.

The study addresses four key questions: 1) To what extent do urban destinations incorporate transformative tourism frameworks (e.g. de-growth, post-growth, regenerative, circular tourism) into their strategies? 2) How are these transformative frameworks implemented in practice? 3) Which metrics are used to measure success? And 4) How do they ensure the transition is socially and environmentally just?

Methodologically, the paper draws on a qualitative analysis of approximately 100 policy documents, including Greater London Authority strategies and borough-level policy materials. Documents in the study include tourism strategies, cultural strategies, night-time economy strategies, climate and sustainability-focused documents and other relevant policy resources. Through the application of postgrowth debates to policy practice, the paper contributes empirically to discussions within degrowth literature, as well as sustainable tourism policy debates, while offering insights into challenges of transforming tourism in cities.

## **Negotiating tourism legitimacy: evolution, governance and agency in Barcelona (2010–2025)**

*Ana Pastor Alcaraz*  
*Universitat Rovira i Virgili*  
*Spain*  
[ana.pastor@urv.cat](mailto:ana.pastor@urv.cat)

*Isabel Paulino*  
[isabel.paulino@urv.cat](mailto:isabel.paulino@urv.cat)

*Oriol Gallardo*  
*Cinta Sanz*

Legitimacy is a socially constructed process through which economic activities and development trajectories come to be perceived as desirable within shared norms and values. It is inherently political and continually shaped through struggles over meaning, authority, and acceptable trajectories of urban development. From evolutionary and complexity-based perspectives, legitimacy emerges endogenously from interactions among stakeholders and institutions. It evolves alongside shifting perceptions of impact and is actively constructed through discourse, policy choices, and governance practices.

Building on this view, this research approaches tourism governance as the arena where legitimacy is negotiated, drawing on insights from Evolutionary Economic Geography. Tourism governance is conceptualised as a path-dependent and relational process shaped by institutional legacies, strategic agency, and evolving stakeholder coalitions. When legitimacy is challenged, responses are rarely linear; rather, they emerge through adaptive experimentation and selective stabilisation amid sustained social mobilisation and political contestation.

Tourism remains a leading global industry, yet it is increasingly contested in many destinations. Against this backdrop, this research examines the evolution of tourism legitimacy in Barcelona (2010–2025), a destination where support for tourism has declined in the past 15 years. It examines how legitimacy is negotiated over time through stakeholders' discourses.

The study adopts a qualitative longitudinal approach, combining tourism policy documents, outputs from the Barcelona CityLab (H2020 SMARTDEST), and semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders conducted in 2021–2022 and 2026. Path tracing identifies critical junctures, shifts in stakeholder configurations, and governance mechanisms through which legitimacy is negotiated and stabilised.

Findings indicate that tourism governance in Barcelona evolves through recurring cycles of legitimacy contestation and contested settlement, rather than comprehensive policy realignment. As the social legitimacy of tourism-led growth erodes, regulatory, participatory, and data-driven instruments increasingly function as political devices rather than neutral problem-solving tools. The resulting arrangements are adaptive yet fragile, with incremental change coexisting alongside unresolved structural tensions.

By foregrounding legitimacy as the central object of governance, this study advances an analytical perspective on urban tourism governance as an ongoing process of legitimacy renegotiation shaped by conflict, adaptation, and institutional path dependence. It offers insights into how mature urban tourism destinations govern chronic legitimacy pressures.

## **Governing tourism in a fragile socio-ecological system: post-growth pathways in the Venetian Lagoon and Metropolitan Area**

*Ana Pastor Alcaraz*  
*Universitat Rovira i Virgili*  
*Spain*  
[ana.pastor@urv.cat](mailto:ana.pastor@urv.cat)

*Irene Pinto*

Venice has long been studied as a clear illustration of the limits of tourism-led growth and tourism monoculture. As one of the world's most iconic destinations, it is embedded within a fragile lagoon ecosystem and underexploited metropolitan area. This paper argues that Venice's current difficulties stem mainly from a fundamental structural issue: a failure of tourism governance shaped by scale mismatches, institutional fragmentation, and decision-making frameworks that remain centred on the municipal level within an inherently relational and multi-scalar system.

Drawing on post-growth and degrowth debates, the paper examines how tourism governance arrangements shape, constrain and potentially enable post-growth pathways, by re-conceptualising the city as a relational città-arcipelago within a broader metropolitan context rather than a bounded detached destination. Although tourism and environmental impacts extend beyond the historic centre, governance remains sectoral and city-bound, limiting integrated, differentiated, and socially just responses. In this sense, the Venetian case study offers a critical lens for examining how existing governance arrangements both constrain and potentially enable transformative transitions in complex destinations.

Empirically, the study examines the overlooked peripheral islands and metropolitan region. These areas are largely absent from dominant tourism narratives and policy agendas and are mainly affected by environmental pressures rather than direct tourism flows. Rather than viewing them as convenient alternatives to mass tourism, the paper explores these spaces as analytical vantage points to consider whether, and under what conditions, more sustainable and place-sensitive tourism practices could develop.

The analysis incorporates document analysis of institutional materials alongside a thematic analysis of semi-structured interviews through a quintuple helix framework, enabling the investigation of interactions among institutional, economic, social, environmental, and knowledge-based actors, with particular focus on conflicts of scale, coordination failures, and uneven impacts on local communities.

Finally, the paper contributes to reframing Venice not as a bounded city, but as part of a wider urban–lagoon–metropolitan system. From this standpoint, Venice exemplifies the challenges faced by mature urban destinations trying to balance tourism development, liveability, and environmental sustainability, while also raising broader questions about post-growth governance trajectories and transformative change in complex urban-regional contexts.

## **From Label to integrated Governance: Co-creating the Terres de l'Ebre Biosphere Reserve**

*Isabel Paulino*  
*Universitat Rovira i Virgili*  
*Spain*  
[isabel.paulino@urv.cat](mailto:isabel.paulino@urv.cat)

*Antoni Domenech*  
*Ana Pastor-Alcaraz*  
*Anna Boqué-Ciurana*  
*Jon Xavier Olano*

Biosphere Reserves (BRs), framed as integrative governance regions where conservation, sustainable development, and learning are jointly pursued; in practice, are often diluted into a “label effect” where symbolic recognition lacks the institutional capacity, decision-making authority, and stable funding. This paper explores how co-creation can reverse this hollowing, using the case of Terres de l'Ebre BR (TEBR). During its first decade, the TEBR's managing body lacked financial and political stability to implement the core actions of its management plan, reducing its activity to a politically reinforced territorial branding and product accreditation, leaving the core functions of UNESCO's MaB programme marginalized. Baseline questionnaire results (n=69) confirmed this “label effect”, with stakeholders primarily associating the biosphere reserve with tourism promotion or product certification, rather than an integrated governance model.

To address this misalignment, we led a structured co-creation process, as an appropriate approach to address the research problem because it combines diagnostic and generative methods, enabling both the identification of governance misalignments and the co-production of shared strategic orientations. Participants were selected based on a “quintuple helix” model, involving heterogeneous stakeholders representing the diverse ecological, political, economic and social perspectives of the region. Across four county-based workshops, 68 participants guided by a multidisciplinary team, iteratively formulated a shared long-term vision, identified priority challenges, and collectively shaped strategic lines for the next 10 years of the TEBR.

Findings show that well-designed co-creation can shift collective understanding from label-based promotion to place-based, multi-level and multi-domain governance. Beyond its diagnostic value, the process served as a pedagogical process, facilitating a collective shift in perspective regarding the BR's identity and purpose. Stakeholders jointly articulated a renewed model around seven strategic lines in which the BR is embedded in territorial decision-making: convening actors to conserve and regenerate natural and cultural heritage, promote sustainable economic development, strengthen resilience to eco-social and climate crises, and reinforce cohesion and shared identity. By addressing the misalignment between symbolic designation and operational capacity, these results contribute to debates on collaborative destination and territorial governance, illustrating co-creation as a practical pathway to counter institutional hollowing and support more integrated, multi-actor governance arrangements.

## **Crisis Terminology and Its Operational Implications in Tourism**

*Rebecca Pearce*  
*Leeds Beckett University*  
*United Kingdom*  
[r.pearce2542@student.leedsbeckett.ac.uk](mailto:r.pearce2542@student.leedsbeckett.ac.uk)

The travel and tourism industry lies at the heart of the United Kingdom's economic success, contributing over £150 billion in gross value added (GVA). While globalisation has enabled rapid advancements, it has also exposed organisations to a broader range of global risks. In this increasingly volatile environment, crises are no longer exceptional but a 'normal' aspect of operational reality. When crises occur, they unfold within complex, tightly coupled systems where multiple organisations must coordinate under time pressure and uncertainty. Disruption in one part of the system can quickly cascade across others, amplifying vulnerability when coordination fails.

Despite the recognised importance of communication and coordination in crisis response, it is often assumed that terms such as incident, crisis or disaster are interpreted consistently by all stakeholders. In practice, crisis-related terminology is shaped by organisational mandates, professional norms and operational priorities meaning that actors may attach different meanings and thresholds to the same terms. These differences matter because terminology underpins escalation processes, decision authority, and the activation of organisational and inter-organisational response processes.

The crisis response phase amplifies the effects of this ambiguity. Under conditions of time pressure, uncertainty and heightened scrutiny, organisations rely on rapid sensemaking to determine an appropriate response, with limited opportunity to negotiate or clarify meanings. Misalignment can be significant and result in over- or under-escalation, delayed decision-making, duplication of effort and breakdowns in communication. In a sector characterised by interdependence and cascading disruption, such effects can undermine both immediate response effectiveness and wider system resilience.

This study is motivated by a combination of academic curiosity and the author's professional experience as a crisis practitioner within the UK outbound travel sector. It will adopt a qualitative approach, using semi-structured interviews with practitioners involved in crisis response within the UK outbound travel sector. Rather than focusing on formal plans or definitions, it will examine how terminology is interpreted, communicated and operationalised in practice during the response phase. The research is expected to develop a conceptual framework illustrating how crisis-related terminology enacts organisational action, alongside practical recommendations to support clearer communication, improved coordination and more effective decision-making across the sector.

## **ALTRI macrocellulose against the Ways to Santiago: Tourism as Community Resistance in Galicia**

*Xerardo Pereiro*  
*UTAD - Universidade de Tras-os-Montes e Alto Douro Department*  
*Portugal*  
[xeradopereiro@utad.pt](mailto:xeradopereiro@utad.pt)

The 'GAMA project' for implementing a Macro Cellulose facility (the biggest of Europe) is being promoted by Greenfiber S.L. (see: <https://greenfiber.es/gl/inicio/>) in partnership with ALTRI (a company based in Portugal, see: <https://altri.pt/en>). From March 5th, 2024, the GAMA project was under public information and assessment, including:

- the Application for Integrated Environmental Authorisation (AAI);
- the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA);
- the Declaration of Public Utility;

- and the Project for the implementation of this large-scale industry and its associated infrastructures (366 hectares).

The implementation of the GAMA project would directly impact the cultural and landscape heritage of the municipalities of Palas de Rei, Melide, Santiso, and Agolada (Galicia – NW Iberian Peninsula). These areas are rich in cultural heritage, and ALTRI is affecting UNESCO's World Heritage Sites as the French Camino de Santiago, that is located 2 km from the projected factory area (with part of its perimeter entering the buffer zone of this world heritage route). Additionally, the macro cellulose envisages by the GAMA project could also partially affect the Primitive Way of Santiago de Compostela.

This project envisages a large-scale factory with an extension of 366 hectares. And its facilities would have heights of:

- 75 metres for the chimney.
- 60 metres for the recovery boiler and the wood handling building.
- 50 metres high for the biomass boiler.
- Several 20-metre-high structures for the warehouses.

In addition, other structures will have to be built:

- A 12,426-metre underground pipe to supply water from the Portodemouros reservoir in the river Ulla (the second largest river in this territory, and the river in the North of the Iberian Peninsula with the highest number of invertebrate animals according to scientific research).

In our communication we shall presents the role of necropolitics in the destruction of tourism ways of life. Also, we shall analyse the social movement, the ways, forms and meanings of glolocal community resistance and the use of cultural tourism discourses (pilgrimage, spiritual, rural... against ALTRI Macrocellulose. Here, tourism became in a tool of community resistance to defend land, global landscapes, ways of life and social justice.

## **The sound of the Quattro Province: traditional music for tourism enhancement**

*Leandro Pessina*

*Dundalk Institute of Technology*

*Ireland / Italy*

[leandro.pessina@dkit.ie](mailto:leandro.pessina@dkit.ie)

The term Quattro Province is employed to comprise a cultural region inscribed within four administrative territories in the North of Italy. These share a common traditional music heritage, composed by instrumental dance tunes played with the fife, mūsa (a local bagpipe) and piano accordion.

Despite being located along the Genoa-Milan corridor, this mountain region is economically depressed and is experiencing social dispersion, as well as ageing and depopulation phenomena. The potential of tourism as an economic driver has not been developed as this territory is primarily perceived as a transit zone between major and wealthier cities like Turin and Milan and the rest of the peninsula, with little consideration for local culture and traditions. Participatory cultural tourism practices represent an opportunity to diversify the local economy and strength the position of this territory on the national tourism market.

This paper highlights the contribution of local music in promoting the Quattro Province as a destination, proposing new alternative, niche and community-based experiences where local sounds are at the core of social and cultural regeneration. Through a methodological approach incorporating qualitative analysis comprehensive of interviews and in-depth ethnographic fieldwork already tested in the north-east of Ireland, this research explores the role of traditional music as a tool to develop creative and regenerative tourism practices, combining it with other themes like gastronomy, natural landscape, built heritage and territorial proximity with historical cities and the Liguria/Tuscany riviera. It seeks to identify and connect people engaged in local music and tourism facilities, understanding how they

could act within a collaborative partnership for music tourism promotion of the Quattro Province as a destination brand. Findings obtained during the data-gathering process highlight the potential of niche, participatory and regenerative tourism practices as forms to appreciate local intangible cultural heritage. Moreover, they can inform future regional tourism development strategies and local DMOs. The paper thus aims to critically engage with and understand the relationship between local identity and musical traditions, proposing strategies to enhance participatory practices and appreciation of this territory and of its traditional music.

## **Mining Value Co-creation in Hospitality: A Web Scraping Analysis of User-Generated Content**

*Viet Phuong Dinh*  
*IAE - Paris 1 Panthéon Sorbonne*  
*France*  
[viet-phuong.dinh@etu.univ-paris1.fr](mailto:viet-phuong.dinh@etu.univ-paris1.fr)

In the evolving hospitality landscape and shifting customer sustainability preferences, leveraging data for strategic insight is essential for adaptation. Grounded in the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM), this study examines how User-Generated Content (UGC) dimensions - volume, timeliness, and usefulness of online reviews - influence tourist satisfaction and the mediating role of green value co-creation between UGC elements and tourists' satisfaction on TripAdvisor. Customers engage in information seeking to clarify service requirements and meet other cognitive needs. Then, they are particularly interested in service status and service parameters. Moreover, sustainability has evolved beyond a trend, driven by growing environmental awareness among tourists. Methodologically, the research employs automated web scraping to systematically harvest and structure large-scale secondary data from a sample of luxury hotels in Hochiminh City, Vietnam. The findings demonstrate that high review volume acts as a critical signal of trustworthiness. Furthermore, results reveal a "recency bias", necessitating a continuous stream of fresh feedback, while the positive correlation between review length and satisfaction suggests that detailed reviews are primarily driven by high-engagement consumer experiences. Finally, the outcomes of this research will benefit hoteliers in implementing UGC to develop appropriate strategies to effectively satisfy tourists. The practical implications, theoretical and managerial contributions of the study, along with its limitations, are discussed in further detail.

## **Beyond banners and bands: Procession in the (post) industrial city**

*Louise Platt*  
*Manchester Metropolitan University*  
*United Kingdom*  
[l.platt@mmu.ac.uk](mailto:l.platt@mmu.ac.uk)

This paper examines the Manchester and Salford Whit Walks (a 220-year-old religious procession) as a counterpoint to instrumentalist contemporary event cultures. Rather than approaching these Walks as heritage spectacle, the paper conceptualises them as place-embedded cultural practice that foregrounds social meaning and collective care over tourism or economic. The Walks embody an iterative, movement-based form of placemaking in which engagement with urban space actively produce and renew a sense of dwelling (Platt & Medway, 2022; Platt, Medway & Steadman, 2021). Success, it can be argued, is seen through community and class (and faith)-based visibility. By taking a long view we come to

see that the Walks are shaped by and inform debates around class, belonging, and the use of public space in a (post)industrial city (Platt, Abushena & Snape, 2021). To date, the research is based on participant observation at the Walks and focus groups with organisers and participants, complemented by an ongoing analysis of local news coverage spanning over two centuries of event reporting and related public debate. These archive materials allow for a longitudinal examination of how the Walks have been framed across periods of industrialisation, post-industrial decline, uneven urban regeneration, and emerging narratives of belonging in the face of "levelling up" and "left behind" political discourse. This extended archival analysis constitutes a form of methodological innovation within event studies, challenging the dominance of instrumentalist frameworks. The paper also outlines the next phase of the project (funding dependent), which will develop participatory deep mapping as praxis for tracing how meanings of place, belonging, and value are continually (re)produced through processional movement in the contemporary city.

### **Tourism-Related Crime Governance in Emerging Destinations: A Critical Assessment of Security Practices and Challenges**

*Getrude Poku*  
*Leeds Beckett University*  
*United Kingdom*  
[g.poku7945@student.leedsbeckett.ac.uk](mailto:g.poku7945@student.leedsbeckett.ac.uk)

Tourism-related crime governance remains underexplored in emerging destinations, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa, where rapid tourism growth intersects with complex socio-economic conditions. Despite Ghana's rising profile as a leading West African destination, limited research has examined how tourism security is operationalised across both formal and informal governance systems. This study investigates how multi-level actors shape tourism-related crime security governance in Ghana and identifies the structural and contextual factors influencing its effectiveness.

Drawing on Routine Activity Theory and Crime Pattern Theory, the study critically evaluates their applicability in Global South contexts. While these frameworks emphasise formal guardianship and spatial opportunity structures, they inadequately account for environments in which security provision is fragmented, informally mediated, and shaped by socio-economic precarity. In Ghana, tourism security governance operates through hybrid arrangements involving state agencies, private enterprises, and community-based actors, thereby challenging conventional assumptions of centralised control.

Using a qualitative multi-stakeholder design, the research draws on semi-structured interviews with police, tourism authorities, NGOs, and hospitality operators, analysed through thematic analysis. The findings reveal a fragmented yet adaptive governance landscape in which formal security mechanisms are constrained by resource limitations, while informal and enterprise-level practices play a compensatory but weakly coordinated role. Persistent knowledge gaps and limited policy integration further undermine strategic coherence.

The study advances destination crime and security management literature by developing a context-sensitive governance perspective that reconceptualises guardianship as a multi-level, polycentric process. It demonstrates that security effectiveness in emerging destinations depends not only on institutional capacity but also on the interaction between formal and informal practices, local socio-economic conditions, and context-specific offender dynamics. These insights provide a theoretically grounded basis for strengthening coordinated and context-responsive tourism security strategies.

## **Running with strangers: community co-creation in ultramarathon events**

*Jess Porritt-Best*  
*University of Westminster*  
*United Kingdom*  
[j.best@westminster.ac.uk](mailto:j.best@westminster.ac.uk)

Ultrarunning has long been depicted as a lonely activity in which participants can truly be disconnected from the outside world (Atkinson, 2015). However while solitude and dislocation are key parts of the ultramarathon experience, so too is community, connection, and co-creation (Mykletun & Mazza, 2016; Jaeschke, Sachs, & Dieffenbach, 2016). With the growing popularity of ultramarathons over the past ten years, ultrarunners are reporting that the camaraderie of the trails matters more than ever as a support system for overcoming challenge.

This paper will focus specifically on *communitas* and the unplanned spontaneous community connections that occur in the ultramarathon eventscape. Moreover, how these connections prompt moments of co-creation between event participants who may never meet again after the race. These interactions provoke feelings of *communitas*, catharsis, and belonging that last long after the event.

This paper outlines additional findings and themes from my wider PhD project which explores the impact of experience design and the participant on transformational experiences in ultramarathons. Data from 27 ultrarunners has been collected over 12 months using interviews, diaries, and visual-mapping methodologies to capture the depth of the ultrarunning experience. Focussing on the essential role of *communitas* and community interactions in creating memorable and transformational event experiences disrupts the traditional narratives of ultrarunning and highlights new areas for research in adventure leisure events and tourism.

## **Residents' perceptions on cross-border cultural tourism in Torne Valley**

*Iida Pyykkö*  
*University of Oulu*  
*Finland*  
[iida.pyykkko@oulu.fi](mailto:iida.pyykkko@oulu.fi)

*Jarkko Saarinen*  
*Lotta Haukipuro*  
*Jutta Karjalainen*

Torne Valley is a remote cross-border region between Finland and Sweden with culturally and touristically rich heritage resources. Nowadays, this Arctic region faces growing interest in tourism investments for economic development. This creates opportunities for exploring cultural and creative tourism models that align with local values, support cultural renewal, and strengthen regional identity and resilience.

This study draws on resident survey data collected in the EU Horizon-funded CROCUS project to examine local perceptions of tourism impacts, importance–satisfaction gaps in cultural attractions, and cross-border cultural engagement and collaboration. Social Exchange Theory is used as the analytical lens for understanding how perceived benefits, costs, and community attachment shape residents' attitudes. Results indicate a strong overall support for tourism development, with residents viewing tourism as an opportunity for job creation, cultural heritage preservation, and economic revitalization. Negative sociocultural or environmental impacts were evaluated neutrally by residents, which probably reflects past low tourism growth intensity and limited direct experiences with tourism impact and pressures. Cross-border cultural connections and traditions are defining characteristics

of the region, although activities are asymmetric between Finnish and Swedish sides of the border.

Notably, residents ranked most cultural and nature based attractions as important yet expressed low satisfaction with their current state and services, signalling untapped cultural and economic potential. Furthermore, the findings indicated that tourism is considered as a potential tool for sustainable development, in general, and especially for cultural revitalization and community empowerment, which refer to a regenerative tourism thinking. Approaching cross-border tourism development through a regenerative lens could offer a framework for restoring cultural heritage, strengthening mutual cross-border collaboration, and ensuring tourism contributes positively to the development and long-term resilience of the region.

## **Philosophy and ethics of festivals and events in 'beyond growth' contexts**

*Bernadette Quinn*

*Technological University Dublin*

*Ireland*

[bernadette.quinn@tudublin.ie](mailto:bernadette.quinn@tudublin.ie)

*Willem Coetzee*

*(first author)*

The philosophical and ethical foundations underpinning festivals and events remain underdeveloped within existing scholarship. Calls for researchers to offer perspectives on post-growth scenarios are, therefore, not only very timely, but offer an opportunity for deep reflection on the kinds of values, ethics and philosophical principles that could underpin the transition of festivals and events away from extractive models prioritizing high-volume and growth. As Karagozi (2025:112) emphasises, degrowth is not just an economic critique, it calls into question the merits of relying unquestioningly on 'the dominant utilitarian frameworks underpinning modern economic systems' and proposes a future which acknowledges the critical importance of nature, and puts care above performance, justice above profit and collective well-being above individual prosperity.

This paper aims to challenge dominant managerial and instrumental paradigms by positioning philosophy and ethics as central to understanding festivals and events in contemporary society. Drawing on an ongoing book project, the authors position festivals and events as sites of ethical struggle and highlight some of the pressing ethical challenges shaping the field today. Key among these challenges are technology and surveillance, cultural representation, labour rights, environmental ethics, diversity and inclusion, political influence, corporate sponsorship as well as many more. Aiming to reframe how festivals and events are conceptualised, designed, experienced, and evaluated, the paper argues that festivals and events are sites of philosophical enquiry. It considers a range of philosophical frameworks that can inform moral reasoning in future 'beyond growth' festival and event scenarios. Among these are e.g. utilitarianism, deontology, virtue ethics, existentialism, and non-Western and Indigenous philosophies such as Ubuntu, alongside emerging approaches such as posthumanism and care ethics. Throughout, the authors offer critical reflections that illuminate how ethical dilemmas are negotiated, challenged, or reproduced in real-world festival and event settings in a way that contributes to more reflexive, responsible, and critically engaged scholarship and practice.

## **Neuroaesthetic Effects of Narrative Contamination on Tourist Expectations**

*Matynas Radzevicius*  
*Kauno kolegija Higher Education institution*  
*Lithuania*  
[martynas.radzevicius@go.kauko.lt](mailto:martynas.radzevicius@go.kauko.lt)

In recent decades, destination narratives have become increasingly shaped by forces that extend beyond local communities and official destination management organisations. Social media influencers create visually polished imagery that establishes specific visual expectations, while popular series transform locations into pilgrimage sites. However, the existing literature focuses predominantly on the influence of media on travel decisions, leaving the psycho-physiological mechanisms through which different content types shape tourist expectations relatively unexplored. It is clear that both forms of mediated representation create expectations that "contaminate" how potential tourists perceive destinations, yet these contamination mechanisms remain under-researched.

This is particularly noticeable in destinations hit by overtourism, where the digital imagery and the reality of crowds create a gap, resulting in visitor dissatisfaction. The chosen cases of Santorini and Dubrovnik show how different contamination sources reshape destination imagery. Santorini is undeniably influenced by influencer-driven aesthetic contamination, where perfect Instagram imagery is designed to meet specific visual expectations. Dubrovnik is a perfect example of a city that has been completely transformed by fiction, as evidenced by the way in which Game of Thrones has changed the city's identity.

The study will compare how these two distinct forms of narrative contamination shape tourists' neuro-physiological responses and emotional reactions when confronted with authentic destination imagery. The central research question is whether different contamination sources produce distinct patterns of expectation-reality dissonance and require different management strategies.

The study employs a mixed experimental design examining both destinations. Participants were exposed to influencer content or popular culture content, followed by authentic destination imagery featuring realistic crowd levels and typical conditions. The study uses the multimodal biometric research platform (iMotions) to capture eye-tracking data and facial expression analysis throughout both exposure phases. Post-experiment measures assess destination image, visit intentions and perceived authenticity. The research makes a significant contribution to tourism research by introducing narrative contamination as a theoretical framework. This framework has two empirically distinct sub-types: aesthetic and fictional contamination. It is clear that these findings will inform destination managers navigating competition with influencers and entertainment narratives, while demonstrating neuroaesthetic methodology applications in experience design and destination marketing.

## **Inclusive tourism in protected areas – can accessibility and conservation coexist?**

*Zoltán Raffay*  
*University of Pécs*  
*Hungary*  
[raffayz@ktk.pte.hu](mailto:raffayz@ktk.pte.hu)

Protected areas are venues of utmost importance in ecotourism, being areas relatively untouched in a world where unspoilt areas are more and more scarce. The infrastructure built to make these areas accessible to visitors necessarily entails some intervention into the natural state of these areas. This is especially true when the needs of a very specific – and growing – market segment, people with disabilities (PwDs), are taken into consideration. According to WHO estimates, approximately 15% of the world's population is affected by some form of disability now, making the segment of permanently or temporarily disabled

people a significant market opportunity for tourism, including ecotourism. Balance must be found, however, between the provision of accessibility (of hiking trails, visitor centres and other ecotourism facilities) for the disabled and the preservation of the natural state and integrity of the protected areas.

Previous research proves that PwDs have very similar travel habits to those of the non-disabled travellers, including the desire to participate in outdoor activities and visit natural areas. Their possibilities, however, are rather limited, few natural areas are accessible to PwDs. The paper explores, in addition to analysing existing literature on the topic (e.g. Garrod & Fennell 2021, Darcy et al. 2010), opportunities for improving accessibility of ecotourism services and facilities, drawing on best practices and insights from a recent online questionnaire survey (started in mid-February 2026) with over 70 responses from national parks of 20+ European countries, and offers recommendations for further development. Most of the responding national parks have a strategy for welcoming and serving guests with disabilities or are planning to develop one, and most of them have already implemented improvements to serve disabled guests (wheelchair-accessible facilities, Braille signs or tactile signage for the visually impaired etc.). Many national parks in Europe have programmes specifically recommended (also) for PwDs or are planning to implement such programmes. The research also defines attractions where accessibility is not possible without jeopardising the aesthetics or the integrity of the area or due to physical reasons (rocky and steep terrains, swamp areas etc.).

The last question of the questionnaire was whether respondents were interested in the findings of the research – nine out of ten responding European national parks are eager to read the research results, which is a promising sign of future accessibility activities in European national parks.

The author is aware of the fact that it is not only national parks where ecotourism is pursued and where guests with different disabilities are received. Contacting all other protected areas, however, is beyond the scope of the research; also, national parks are usually the most organised protected areas in their countries, usually at the top of the IUCN categories of protected areas, all employing experts on tourism, so having their opinion on the possible implementation of accessible tourism in protected areas seems to be the most valuable.

## **Making the Invisible Visible: The Place-Shaping Power of Intangible Heritage**

*Ágnes Raffay-Danyi*  
*University of Pannonia*  
*Hungary*  
[raffay.agnes@gtk.uni-pannon.hu](mailto:raffay.agnes@gtk.uni-pannon.hu)

*Katalin Lőrincz*  
*Zsófia Papp*

Heritage and tourism work together like a married couple: they complement and support each other but also create challenges to each other that can only be tackled by mutual understanding collaboration. Heritage presents basis for tourism, while tourism supports heritage preservation (Ortega et al, 2023), but it may also contribute to commercialisation of heritage. The role of the local community is crucial both in preserving heritage and shaping tourism in a destination (Richards et al, 2025).

Within the framework of the CROCUS project, stakeholders in the South Zala region of Hungary work together to revive historical heritage of the town of Nagykanizsa through a proposed festival combining historical, gastronomic heritage and arts and crafts which would provide an alternative to commercial mass festivals which are not rooted in the local heritage of the place. The cult of Captain György Thury who defended the town against the Ottoman pressure in the late 1560s has been determining in the life of Nagykanizsa ever since, with several institutions including the local museum bearing his name, however the tourism

potential in this heritage has not been exploited yet. The idea of reviving medieval times and recreating the lost castle of Nagykanizsa has been around for over a decade in various forms, including staging a festival where 'brick tickets' would be sold to foster public contribution to rebuilding the castle, which then could become a tourist attraction. With new impetus from the CROCUS project, stakeholders involved in developing sustainable business models for cultural and creative tourism in the region have put the idea back to the design table. Stakeholders involving cultural and tourism stakeholders and residents are designing a sustainable business model canvas for the Castle-less Festival which could become the flagship event of the destination, thereby providing a major attraction to draw tourists and lifting tourism to a level which can contribute to preserving the revived heritage in the long term. Participation in the ideation and business model development workshops and interviews provide insight into the process of redesigning the festival idea and the imaginary re-building of the lost castle.

### **Structuristic Art as Event-Based Placemaking in Creative Tourism**

*Onna Rageth*

*UAS of the Grisons, Institute for Tourism and Leisure*

*Switzerland*

[onna.rageth@fhgr.ch](mailto:onna.rageth@fhgr.ch)

Cultural and creative tourism have increasingly been mobilised as place-based policy tools aimed at enhancing social sustainability, cultural identity, and quality of life in destinations. Rather than functioning merely as economic drivers, cultural and creative practices are now understood as mechanisms through which places are actively shaped, symbolically produced, and socially experienced (Richards, 2017). This paper examines Structuristic Art, a participatory artistic technique, as a creative tourism practice with particular potential to support community engagement and identity formation through event-based placemaking in Switzerland.

Building on theories of eventfulness and eventalisation, the paper conceptualises Structuristic Art events as spatial and temporal interventions that contribute to the production of place meanings. Events are increasingly recognised as spatial phenomena that generate new qualities in urban and regional spaces, enriching them through difference, distinction, and symbolic value (Richards & Palmer, 2010; Smith, 2009). Structuristic Art events, which invite participants to transform emotions and experiences into layered visual compositions, exemplify how creative participation can "make tangible which was previously intangible" (Ramsay & Barlow Sweet, 2008). In doing so, they produce eventful spaces imbued with new meanings, fostering place-belonging and emotional attachment (Hubbard, 2017; Low, 2016).

The paper further situates Structuristic Art within debates on identity as a spatial and relational process. Identity is formed through lived engagement with space and through interaction with others, with events playing a crucial role in mediating collective experiences and symbolic recognition (Hetherington, 1998). Cultural events can function as "social glue," reinforcing shared pride and place identity while offering opportunities for inclusive participation (Foley et al., 2012; Marques, 2013). While acknowledging critiques that social capital generated through events may be unevenly distributed (Stevenson, 2016), the low-threshold and emotionally expressive nature of Structuristic Art suggests particular potential for inclusive placemaking involving both residents and visitors.

By framing Structuristic Art as an event-based creative tourism practice, this paper contributes to policy-relevant debates on destination management organisations as placemakers. It highlights how participatory art events can support place-based cultural strategies that enhance social cohesion, strengthen identity, and improve quality of life, aligning with emerging approaches to cultural and creative tourism development.

## **Building capacity for regenerative places with tourism product design**

*Sanna-Mari Renfors*  
*Lapland University of Applied Sciences*  
*Finland*  
[sanna-mari.renfors@lapinamk.fi](mailto:sanna-mari.renfors@lapinamk.fi)

*Margrit Kärp*  
[margrit.karp@ut.ee](mailto:margrit.karp@ut.ee)

*Kati Koivunen*  
[kati.koivunen@lapinamk.fi](mailto:kati.koivunen@lapinamk.fi)

Regenerative tourism is gaining momentum as conventional sustainability targets are falling short and progress remains too slow. Consequently, tourism companies increasingly seek to design regenerative products to diversify their offerings, yet they often lack clarity on how these differ from sustainable products. Indeed, regenerative product design entails rethinking product purpose, design processes, and stakeholder roles. Crucially, it requires a profound worldview shift, positioning tourism as part of a living, interdependent system rather than a separate economic activity.

This research investigates the integration of regenerative development principles into tourism product design to foster resilient and thriving living systems. It addresses the question: What constitutes a regenerative tourism product and its design process? Emphasis is placed on place-sourced design, systems thinking, and capacity building as foundational principles delineating regenerative design from conventional sustainability approaches.

Thus, drawing from regenerative development theory and six case studies with qualitative interviews from Finland and Estonia, the study proposes a conceptual framework outlining the defining characteristics of regenerative tourism product design.

The findings highlight that collaboration with nature and local communities is fundamental to regenerative tourism product design. This process is conceptualised as a capacity-building journey, wherein humans co-evolve with the social–ecological system and product ideas emerge from local ecological, social, and cultural patterns. Tourism products serve as tools to enhance the vitality and wellbeing of both natural and human systems within a specific place. Design emphasises iterative processes, long-term impact, and meaningful dialogue through open participation and collaboration. It fosters personal reflection and relationships among individuals and between people and nature, leveraging diverse skills and potential. Crucially, the process requires place literacy to integrate the unique ecological, social, and cultural patterns of the place into product design.

A key challenge is avoiding “cosmetic regeneration,” where sustainable products are rebranded as regenerative without adopting a systemic mindset. This underscores the need for deeper inquiry to support tourism companies in adopting a shift in their mindset. The proposed framework clarifies the distinctive features of regenerative design and provides guidance for tourism companies seeking to move beyond sustainability toward genuinely regenerative approaches.

## **Placemaking through cultural tourism: Creating new meanings for heritage**

*Greg Richards*

ATLAS

Netherlands

[g.w.richards@tilburguniversity.edu](mailto:g.w.richards@tilburguniversity.edu)

*Leontine Onderwater*

[Leontine.onderwater@atlas-euro.org](mailto:Leontine.onderwater@atlas-euro.org)

Cultural tourism has long been seen as a key element of the tourism market, accounting for almost 40% of international tourism. In the past, cultural tourism was seen primarily as a means of boosting the economy through attracting high spending tourists who would also support cultural resources. In recent years, however, the cultural and social roles of cultural tourism have been increasingly highlighted, and this has led towards a placemaking approach to cultural tourism development in some areas.

This development has been pioneered by destination marketing organisations who have reimagined their role as placemaking bodies. In this shift towards placemaking, tourists have become seen as more than simple providers of money to local economies. They are increasingly positioned as active agents in broader socio-cultural and development processes who can act together with local communities and other local actors to make places better for all.

Richards (2020) provides a model of the creative placemaking system, in which the placemaking process is envisaged as a synergistic combination of resources, meanings and creativity. Local resources have to be imbued with meaning for different actors in order to ensure their activation and utilisation, which in turn requires creative thinking and action on the part those actors. This model has recently been adapted by the Crocus Project to incorporate the placeshaping processes through which the key elements of resources, meanings and creativity can be integrated.

This paper provides an empirical examination of this model through 18 interviews conducted with cultural tourism stakeholders in the Netherlands, Belgium and Germany. Particular attention is paid to the way in which cultural tourism stakeholders collaborate across borders to create new cultural tourism projects and load these with new meanings to develop cross-border tourism. The results show that meaning-making strategies, in particular storytelling, can be effective in attracting visitors to previously marginal destinations.

## **Modelling the EU Tourism Labour Market: Focus on Unionisation**

*Blaž Rodič*

University of Maribor

Slovenia

[blaz.rodic@fis.unm.si](mailto:blaz.rodic@fis.unm.si)

*Maja Turnšek*

*Maja Breznik*

*Jerneja Šavrič*

[jerneja.savric@um.si](mailto:jerneja.savric@um.si)

This paper presents a System Dynamics (SD) model focusing on the role of unionisation in the tourism labour market. We model the main forms of employment in tourism including platform work, and the influence of seasonality, job security, and the condition of the tourism market on the structure of labour force and consequently the level of unionization and

working conditions. We present several simulation scenarios of regulative interventions aiming to improve working conditions in tourism and a scenario of tourism market disruption. The model is based on previous research, consultations with domain experts, publicly available data on trade union representativeness and statistical data on the food and accommodation sector in the EU. We have identified several reinforcing loops in the interaction of tourism market stakeholders that may lead to erosion of working conditions. The resulting simulation model can be used to provide insight into the tourism labour market dynamics and support the development of stakeholder policies.

### **Money, morals and emotions: a horse tourism livelihood in China's frontier**

*Heidi Rui Yang*

*Leeds Beckett University*

*United Kingdom*

[r.yang2386@student.leedsbeckett.ac.uk](mailto:r.yang2386@student.leedsbeckett.ac.uk)

In contemporary China, horses are involved in diverse human activities such as farming, transport, pastoralism, tourism, sport and leisure. This study is situated in a tourism-based livelihood diversification project in an impoverished village along the China–Myanmar border. Based on 5.5 months of ethnographic fieldwork and 39 interviews with rural households, and drawing on Judith Butler's queer theory and Michèle Lamont's cultural sociology, it seeks to unsettle dominant, often urban- and Western-centred assumptions about human–horse relations and to examine how marginalised groups construct meaning through their everyday work and lives with horses in tourism-led poverty alleviation.

The research findings on human–horse relations in tourism are threefold. Essentially, horses are described by their owners as tools for making money. Previous dominant livelihoods in the rural community were small-scale farming and migrant work. It was not until the development of the local tourism industry over the past ten years that villagers joined the horse-riding cooperative, where each household raises a horse and offers horse-riding activities to tourists in the nearby national park. However, horses are also seen as both sentient and spiritual beings, working buddies, and part of the family. Morals are frequently emphasised when local people are asked about their human–horse relationships. Villagers appreciate the horses' irreplaceable contribution to their three-generational households, and they care for and work with them in a reciprocal manner. Meanwhile, emotion is the least common ground among horse owners: there is a spectrum of attitudes ranging from liking to indifference to dislike. In this vein, human workers adopt a distinctive anthropocentric view of their horses, seeing them as inferior animals compared to humans, although they clearly distinguish their working horses from pets such as dogs and cats, or livestock such as geese and chickens.

Overall, the project contributes to the study of global horse tourism which to date has been largely dominated by contexts in post-industrial societies in the Global North. In addition, it complicates our understanding of human–animal relations by showing how livelihood strategies, moral responsibilities of care and reciprocity, and emotional ambivalence intersect in everyday rural Chinese lives.

## **Power and Participation in Living Labs: Implications for Tourism Innovation**

*Theresa Ryan*  
*Technological University Dublin*  
*Ireland*  
[theresa.ryan@tudublin.ie](mailto:theresa.ryan@tudublin.ie)

Living Labs (LLs) are now widely used to support innovation in areas such as urban development, digital technologies, sustainability, and, increasingly, tourism. They are commonly described as participatory and co-creative spaces of collaboration that bring together universities, businesses, public organisations and citizens to address complex challenges. However, much of the existing LL literature focuses on innovation and policy outcomes, with less attention being paid to how participation is shaped in practice, whose values guide decision-making, and how power operates within these collaborative settings. This paper asks: How do power relations shape participation in LLs, and what implications does this have for tourism? Using theories of participation, power and situated knowledge, it presents a critical review of LL research, examining how LLs have been understood and put into practice across different domains. It explores how economic and technological priorities influence the design of LLs and the outcomes they produce. While LLs frequently promise inclusion and co-creation, the literature points to ongoing tensions between creativity, economic goals, and sustainability, as well as recurring patterns of limited decision-making power for community actors. Indeed, the paper finds that LLs are not neutral innovation spaces but rather are sites where values and power are negotiated. It argues that co-creation is shaped by choices and that power and knowledge are always present, even when intentions are good. Overall, it calls for the development of more critical LL frameworks in the interest of achieving more socially just tourism futures.

Drawing on examples from urban, environmental and social innovation LLs published in the literature, and considering their relevance for tourism contexts, the paper highlights alternative approaches that place greater emphasis on community well-being, care and long-term sustainability. In particular it draws on Tronto's five caring practices to argue that introducing an ethics of care into LL design and practice can show that innovation doesn't have to be about competition and profit, it can also be about caring for communities and places. Ultimately, the paper develops a conceptual framework for analysing power and participation in LLs and considers how these insights may inform more equitable and sustainable tourism innovation.

## **(Im)mobile solidarities: case study of international volunteering in Palestine**

*Marta Salvador-Almela*  
*CETT Barcelona School of Tourism, Hospitality and Gastronomy*  
*Spain*  
[marta.salvador@cett.cat](mailto:marta.salvador@cett.cat)

*Neixé Castellano*

This communication explores how international volunteering and cooperation are being reshaped in situations of crisis and political violence, with a focus on presence-based solidarity efforts in the West Bank. Using the Palestinian case, the study engages with current debates on the spatial and mobile aspects of volunteering during times of polycrisis, where care, ethics, responsibility, and mobility are closely linked with control, insecurity, and unequal power relations.

Since 1948, following the establishment of the State of Israel and the displacement of Palestinians, Palestine has relied heavily on international humanitarian aid. Recent increases in violence in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip have exposed the limitations of

traditional international cooperation models, especially in contexts marked by ongoing violence and territorial division. In response, organisations such as the International Solidarity Movement (ISM), Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT), International Women's Peace Service (IWPS), and the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI) have developed forms of international volunteering grounded in physical presence, accompaniment, observation, and documentation.

From an analytical perspective, these initiatives exemplify various forms of solidarity intervention, each with unique strategies for confronting, mediating, achieving visibility, and managing risk. This research, grounded in document analysis, examines how these organisations address local needs while navigating global constraints, prepare volunteers for contexts of insecurity, and manage expectations, responsibility, and personal risk under increasingly restrictive mobility regimes.

The research emphasises how volunteers' (im)mobilities are influenced by borders, surveillance, and violence. It also shows how volunteering serves as a space for envisioning rights-based, activist, and transnational solidarities that go beyond the immediate act of volunteering. In this way, the study contributes to critical discussions on the future of international volunteering and cooperation within highly unequal and conflictual geographies.

### **Participatory visual practices: case study of volunteer tourism**

*Marta Salvador-Almela*

*CETT Barcelona School of Tourism, Hospitality and Gastronomy  
Spain*

[marta.salvador@cett.cat](mailto:marta.salvador@cett.cat)

*Elisa Burrai*

[e.burrai@leedsbeckett.ac.uk](mailto:e.burrai@leedsbeckett.ac.uk)

*Davide Sterchele*

[d.sterchele@leedsbeckett.ac.uk](mailto:d.sterchele@leedsbeckett.ac.uk)

Tourism imaginaries are increasingly shaped and challenged by images shared on social media platforms, where visibility transforms into power. In volunteer tourism, these visuals tend to highlight the views of international volunteers, while host communities appear but are excluded from the narratives. This contribution examines how participation, voice, and agency are negotiated through visual practices and what becomes visible when communities actively engage in creating tourism imagery.

Drawing on Participatory Action Research (PAR), this research views visual content as a space for inquiry, negotiation, and ethical challenges. The research focuses on a case study in Arusha, Tanzania, where an Instagram account run by international volunteers served as a vital digital mobility infrastructure, sharing emotionally resonant images of place, care, and encounter while excluding local authorship.

Rooted in Freirean pedagogy and participatory traditions, PAR emphasises equal research interactions and treats community members as co-researchers rather than passive subjects. Using a participatory audiovisual approach, two community members collaborated as co-researchers, collectively selecting images, discussing, and re-authoring Instagram content. A focus group examined local meanings of existing images, absences, and narrative frames, followed by a co-creative phase where alternative visual sequences were developed and shared. The final visual outputs display not only changes in representation but also moments of tension, discomfort, and ambivalence regarding participation, visibility, and extractive practices.

By prioritising visuals, this work questions whether participatory visual interventions in volunteer tourism foster more inclusive perspectives or risk creating new forms of symbolic extraction. It adds to discussions on digital mobilities, ethics of representation, and

collaborative visual methods, showing how participatory visual practices can both uncover and challenge dominant tourism imaginaries.

### **AI-Driven Solutions for DMO's: Creation and Interaction with Visitor Personas**

*Jo Sanmartí Vives*  
*University of Girona*  
*Spain*  
[jo.sanmarti@udg.edu](mailto:jo.sanmarti@udg.edu)

*Daniel Blasco*  
[dani.blasco@udg.edu](mailto:dani.blasco@udg.edu)

*Damià Serrano*  
*Rodolfo Baggio*

This paper outlines an applied research study on mindset-based visitor segmentation for the tourism destination marketing and management organisation (DMMO) of Catalonia, which used artificial intelligence to create and interpret data-driven visitor personas. The suggested technique goes beyond typical socio-demographic and behavioural segmentation to capture visitors' attitudes, values, and decision-making patterns in both their daily lives and travel contexts. This dual-perspective segmentation recognises that travel behaviour is an extension of "ordinary" life routines rather than an independent activity, allowing for a more thorough evaluation of tourist motivations and expectations. Different tourism data sources have been combined and modelled using large language models to create coherent visitor personas that represent distinct mindset segments relevant to the Catalan tourism ecosystem. One breakthrough is the use of conversational AI to communicate with these identities as simulated guests. Practitioners can hold structured "dialogues" with each persona to gain insight into preferences, reactions, and perceived value across product, service, and destination narratives. This approach generates a dynamic insight layer that complements traditional research and facilitates evidence-based decision-making. The findings highlight several benefits: (1) increased empathy with visitors through attitude-based understanding across life and travel domains; (2) better alignment of experiences and communications with segment mindsets; (3) more precise targeting and positioning strategies; and (4) rapid, low-cost scenario testing for marketing and product development. For tourism destination marketing and management organisations, this technique allows for scalable personalisation while retaining strategic marketing consistency.

### **Passport Leisure: Rethinking Visibility in Cross-Border Voluntourism**

*Sohini Sarkar*  
*Indian Institute of Technology Roorkee*  
*India*  
[sohini\\_s@hs.iitr.ac.in](mailto:sohini_s@hs.iitr.ac.in)

Volunteer tourism scholarship has largely centred on altruistic motivation, ethical care and development impact. Yet, less attention has been paid to how unequal mobility regimes shape the conditions under which cross-border leisure practices and the communities formed around them become visible, circulated or marginalised, particularly in moments of socio-ecological and geopolitical crisis. This study uses the term 'passport leisure' to explore cross-border volunteering and rethink how mobility privilege structures serious leisure across borders. Drawing on Robert A. Stebbins' (1982) Serious Leisure framework and volunteer tourism scholarship (Burrai & Sterchele, 2025), this study suggests that passport strength

and mobility privilege influence not only access to peripheral or scrutinised sites, but also the extent to which those sites gain recognition beyond their local context. Methodologically, the paper undertakes a qualitative discourse and visual analysis of two cross-border voluntourism contexts situated within contrasting mobility regimes, one shaped by high passport-enabled mobility and the other by comparatively constrained cross-border access. Focusing on publicly circulating representations, including NGO materials, volunteer narratives, and digital images, the analysis treats these cases as exploratory illustrations for examining how passport privilege shapes visibility. The analysis also highlights how mobility infrastructure, media framing and platform dynamics interact to differentiate whose leisure and whose collaborative volunteer communities become globally recognisable, and whose remain locally constrained or digitally muted. By redirecting analytical attention from volunteer intention to mobility-enabled circulation, this study argues for a structural reorientation in voluntourism scholarship. In doing so, the study invites reconsideration of how serious leisure operates unevenly across borders in a time of crisis shaped by algorithmic mediation and geopolitical asymmetry.

### **Collaborative Youth Event Design in Times of Community Disruption**

*Alayna Schmidt*  
*Clemson University*  
*United States*  
[alaynas@clemson.edu](mailto:alaynas@clemson.edu)

This paper draws on a multi-year youth participatory action research (YPAR; Cammarota & Fine, 2010) project with youth organizers (ages 11-24) surviving gender, racial, and class oppression in the Southern Appalachian region of the United States. It presents how youth navigated disturbance (Solnit, 2010; Tsing, 2015) through relationality (Deloria & Wildcat, 2001; Halle-Erby, 2024) and solidarity (Liu & Shange, 2018), building their capacity to imagine and become otherwise (King et al., 2020). Appalachia is both a traumatized and resilient landscape where healing is inseparable from resistance to extractive and oppressive systems (Eckenwiler, 2018; Ginwright, 2010; Johnston, 2023). Much of the Southern Appalachian region economically depends on tourism which was disrupted for months in the aftermath of Hurricane Helene, a devastating climate event that occurred during our project. At the same time, anti-trans legislation and racialized violence have been increasing across the U.S., severely affecting the mental and physical safety of youth. Our YPAR project engaged in creative, collaborative inquiry to examine how youth co-created otherwise worlds within a community disrupted by environmental devastation compounded by social and political harm. Youth in the project chose to develop and implement a multi-day event for their peers as the 'action' component of the YPAR project. During this event, youth shared skills, affirmed their identities, connected with land and a like-minded community, and engaged in action on issues they care about. What we found from our collaborative meaning-making of the event was that the horizontal leadership structures of youth-adult partnerships enabled youth to cultivate a counterspace that supported their wellbeing while responding creatively to ongoing structural disruptions. The counterspace youth co-created helped foster belonging among queer and trans Appalachian youth while simultaneously prompting each other to critically explore their understanding of and connection to the Appalachian region and various social and political issues affecting their lives. Our study offers insights for youth workers, community organizations, and community-engaged researchers interested in the practices and possibilities of co-developed events for play and skill sharing in times of disruption.

## **Participatory, Purposeful, Digitally Smart Governance of Intangible Heritage Tourism**

*Marco Scholtz*

*Thomas More University of Applied Sciences*

*Belgium*

[marco.scholtz@thomasmore.be](mailto:marco.scholtz@thomasmore.be)

*Kaat De Ridder*

In times of intersecting social, economic and technological crises, cultural tourism destinations increasingly turn to Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) and digital media to strengthen community attachment and resilience. Yet technology-led, top-down initiatives often underperform, risking superficial engagement, commodification and weakened safeguarding for practising communities. This paper asks how collaborative, community-centred governance and judicious digitalisation can co-create ICH tourism experiences that both engage visitors and uphold safeguarding commitments. The study synthesises evidence from three linked projects in Flanders and the Netherlands – Unlocking the Tourism Potential of ICH, DigitICE, and Living Heritage Journeys – using a comparative mixed-methods design. Across interviews, workshops, visitor surveys, and prototyping, we examine how context, stakeholder roles, and visitor preferences interact to co-create ICH-based experiences. Findings show that digital media rarely succeeds as a standalone driver. It performs best as a modest, socially compatible layer that supports human mediation, anchors practices in place and time, and respects community-defined limits of acceptable change, consent and benefit-sharing. Visitors generally favour short, low-threshold formats; willingness to pay for phone-based augmented reality is modest; and ‘free-area’ framing of living landscapes undermines desire to contribute financially or emotionally. Drawing on these insights, we introduce the PPDS framework (Participatory, Purposeful, Digitally Smart) as a governance-first, community-led approach to ICH tourism during crises. PPDS structures collaboration across five gates (G0–G4): framing the context and purposes; co-deciding safeguarding guardrails; co-designing experiences; piloting under real conditions; and deciding/scaling decisions based on accessibility, GDPR compliance, maintainability and evidence of experiential and safeguarding gain. By sequencing roles, rights, and responsibilities before significant technological investment, PPDS offers a practical tool for destinations seeking to co-create ICH tourism offers that enhance the visitor experience, strengthen community agency, and contribute to more just and resilient tourism futures.

## **Overtourism as Lived Experience: Youth Voices from Dubrovnik’s Old Town**

*Tina Segota*

*University of Maribor*

*Slovenia*

[tina.segota@um.si](mailto:tina.segota@um.si)

*Heike Schanzel*

[heike.schanzel@aut.ac.nz](mailto:heike.schanzel@aut.ac.nz)

Children and young people are increasingly recognised within international policy frameworks as rights-holders and active social actors, yet their perspectives remain largely absent from tourism research and destination governance. This omission is particularly evident in overtourism scholarship, where adult-centric framings dominate debates on crowding, sustainability, and visitor management, despite the profound ways tourism saturation shapes young people’s everyday lives. This presentation argues for the systematic inclusion of children’s voices in tourism research and presents preliminary

findings from an empirical study examining how young residents perceive and experience overtourism in Dubrovnik, Croatia.

Dubrovnik's UNESCO-listed Old Town is one of Europe's most prominent overtourism hotspots, characterised by intense cruise tourism, crowding, and the commodification of urban heritage. While the impacts of overtourism on adult residents, infrastructure, and heritage preservation are well documented, the experiences of local children and youth remain largely unexplored. This study focuses on students attending a high school in the Old Town and adopts photovoice as a child-centred, participatory visual methodology that foregrounds youth agency and co-creates knowledge. It positions young people as knowledgeable observers of tourism's everyday impacts on their mobility, sense of identity, well-being, and quality of life.

Participants use digital cameras to document spaces, moments, and practices they associate with overtourism in their daily lives. These photographs serve as the basis for facilitated group discussions in which participants interpret their images, share personal narratives, and collectively identify key themes. Through this process, young people become co-researchers, generating rich qualitative data that illuminate how overtourism is experienced through everyday routines, access to public space, emotional responses, and place attachment.

Beyond data generation, the photovoice approach is designed to foster critical reflection, dialogue, and advocacy. Youth-generated insights are translated into accessible outputs intended to inform policymakers and destination stakeholders, contributing to more inclusive and socially sustainable tourism governance. By centring children's voices through collaborative and co-creative methods, this research reframes overtourism as a lived community crisis and demonstrates the value of youth-informed approaches to destination management in highly pressured heritage cities such as Dubrovnik.

## **Bounded Openness and Tourism System Resilience under Crisis: Evidence from China's Hainan Free Trade Port**

*Xiaohua Shi*  
*Henan Normal University*  
*United Kingdom*  
[shixiaohua@htu.edu.cn](mailto:shixiaohua@htu.edu.cn)

*Neelu Seetaram*

In an era characterised by intersecting crises—including pandemics, geopolitical tensions, and economic restructuring—tourism destinations increasingly operate within complex and multi-layered governance systems. This study examines how a state-engineered “bounded openness” regime reshapes tourism system performance and resilience. Using the case of China's Hainan Free Trade Port (FTP), which introduces a dual-boundary structure combining external trade liberalisation with internal regulatory controls, we conceptualise bounded openness as a nested governance configuration that alters capital mobility, investment incentives, and institutional expectations within tourism systems.

Drawing on monthly and quarterly provincial data from 2020 to 2025, we employ a dynamic difference-in-differences and event study framework to estimate the anticipatory and structural effects of the FTP reform on tourism outcomes. We further construct a bounded openness intensity index incorporating capital inflows, port throughput, foreign direct investment, and policy activation indicators to examine mechanism pathways. To assess system resilience, we analyse post-shock recovery speed, volatility, and adaptive capacity following pandemic-related disruptions.

Results indicate that bounded openness generates significant anticipatory investment responses and improves medium-term recovery dynamics in tourism performance, though short-term volatility increases during transition phases. Mechanism analysis suggests that

enhanced capital circulation and infrastructure investment mediate these effects, while institutional credibility conditions their magnitude.

By integrating political economy perspectives with tourism system resilience theory, this study advances understanding of how internally regulated liberalisation regimes influence destination governance under crisis. The findings offer broader implications for destinations seeking to balance openness, control, and community stability in turbulent global contexts.

## **Collaboration on AI Governance as an Urgent Need in the Tourism Industry**

*Patrick Shields*  
*Munster Technological University*  
*Ireland*  
[patrickj.shields@mymtu.ie](mailto:patrickj.shields@mymtu.ie)

*Angela Wright*  
*Breda O'Dwyer*

The rapid growth in the use and availability of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools across the tourism sector has outpaced the development of effective and relevant governance, policy and organisational guardrails. This has in turn contributed to negative impacts relating to risk and trust in daily operations. While much discussion on AI ethics and safety revolves around regulation and the actions of technological providers, tourism businesses and their employees are engaging more and more with AI tools in a fragmented and informal manner. Drawing on emerging insights from ongoing doctoral research in GenAI adoption for hospitality SMEs, this paper explores how inaccurate or misleading AI outputs can negatively impact decision making and service delivery in tourism service contexts. In recently published industry research in Ireland, it has been noted that 4 out of 5 business leaders understand that AI is being used inside their organisations by team members with no guardrails present. Moreover, it has been flagged that just 1 in 10 SMEs possess any AI strategy whatsoever (Trinity Centre for Digital Business and Analytics, 2025). When it comes to AI generated content, outputs may manifest in the form of hallucinated or exaggerated documents and/or false regulatory guidance. Without effective governance, tourism businesses do not have a mechanism to prevent such outputs forming part of daily operations. Moreover, bad actors in the form of false review creators, and those seeking to cause reputational harm, may act with relative impunity against tourism businesses where organisational governance is lacking.

This paper argues that the Tourism sector must take the initiative in addressing these challenges. Policy, while often transferable across businesses, must possess a capacity to identify the context and nuance of the tourism firms in which they are incorporated. Further, since such enterprises are often resource constrained, communication strategy becomes all the more critical. Translating AI risk into sector relevant language with a focus on critical engagement with AI generated content, will support the enablement of employees to review, analyse and contextualise AI outputs. Moreover, the integration of perspectives from sectoral research and behavioural technology adoption models will benefit this process.

## **Governing GenAI Adoption in Tourism & Hospitality SMEs: A Systems Perspective**

*Patrick Shields*  
*Munster Technological University*  
*Ireland*  
[patrickj.shields@mymtu.ie](mailto:patrickj.shields@mymtu.ie)

*Angela Wright*  
(supervisor)

*Breda O'Dwyer*  
(supervisor)

The rapid and ongoing diffusion of Generative AI (GenAI) technology within tourism and hospitality (T&H) businesses, and in particular Small to Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs), presents a significant and novel governance challenge. While industry, media and government policy espouses the benefits of GenAI for productivity, cost saving and revenue generation, adoption among T&H SMEs remains uneven, fragmented and lacking in effective employee communication & governance. This paper adopts a systems thinking perspective to examine GenAI adoption not simply as a technological endeavour but as a complex governance issue shaped by multiple dynamics and stakeholders, touching all facets of the enterprise.

Drawing on an ongoing Doctoral study, focused on small to medium sized independent hotels (SMIHs), the research applies an extended Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) framework to explore how the constructs of performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence and facilitating conditions interact with governance related factors such as risk, trust and the absence of formal policy or procedures. Preliminary insights reveal that GenAI usage inside enterprise is often driven by individual employees acting outside of the scope or awareness of organisational leadership. This use frequently takes place where governance frameworks for guidance remain absent or under communicated, resulting in significant organisational risk.

From a systems perspective, such developments reveal an active vulnerability within T&H ecosystems. This is occurring in an environment where governance, policy and strategy are lagging employees evolving technological habits. Informal GenAI usage shows no signs of abating with industry reports finding that many business leaders are aware AI tools are in use within their companies without effective guardrails. Such dynamics indicate the potential for a slow burning governance crisis where a cascading level of intellectual property, private financial information and identifiable employee data is being shared with Large Language Models at a level unbeknownst to, and uncontrolled by, organisational leadership. Thus, this paper argues for the urgent implementation of governance frameworks that anticipate risks and integrate employee feedback loops to address this issue.

## **Between Solidarity and Mobility: Navigating the Spaces, Ethics, and Constraints of Volunteer Tourism in Kizimkazi, Zanzibar**

*Goretti Silva*  
*Instituto Politécnico de Viana do Castelo*  
*Portugal*  
[goretti@estg.ipvc.pt](mailto:goretti@estg.ipvc.pt)

*Mariana Aragão*

Volunteer tourism is a practice of care, often framed as an intercultural solidarity, yet it is also an inherently spatial and mobile phenomenon, generating fleeting but powerful spaces

of encounter shaped by the unequal conditions that make them possible (Laurie & Baillie Smith, 2018; Burrai & Sterchele, 2025). Drawing on a qualitative case study of the CRHope Foundation's "Seeds of Light" project in Kizimkazi, Zanzibar (Tanzania), this paper examines the motivations, constraints, and lived experiences of volunteer tourists, and the fleeting yet profound spaces of care they inhabit and leave behind.

The study is intentionally multi-positional, combining participant observation by one of the authors as an embedded volunteer, focus groups with current (FG1) and prospective volunteers in Portugal (FG2), and semi-structured interviews with local and intermediary organisations. This methodological plurality traces how the volunteering experience is imagined, negotiated, and embodied across different moments: before departure, during immersion, and upon return.

The paper engages critically with three interlocking themes. First, it explores how the Global North–South mobility corridor structures this form of voluntourism: young adults from Western Europe arriving at a marginalised East African fishing community through international volunteer networks. This raises questions about whose solidarity is mobile, whose place is rendered a "site of need" (Mostafanezhad, 2014), and how geographies of care are produced and reproduced through organisational intermediaries and digital platforms (Trifan & Dolezal, 2024).

Second, the study reveals a striking asymmetry between volunteers and prospective volunteers. Those who participated (FG1) report overwhelmingly positive outcomes as emotional solidarity, transformation, and desire to return (An et al., 2022), while those yet to go (FG2) anticipate denser obstacles: financial barriers, safety concerns, fear of social media criticism, and anticipated emotional disruption (Guttentag, 2009; Sin, 2009). This gap invites reflection on how the affective geography of a volunteer destination is constructed and mediated before arrival (Trifan & Dolezal, 2024).

Third, and most centrally, the paper develops the concept of "bubbles of solidarity", ephemeral yet intense spaces of shared care that emerge within the project, where material scarcity paradoxically becomes the condition for dense affective bonds between international volunteers and local children. Inside these bubbles, sharing a scarce bottle of water or a handful of school supplies generates a quality of human connection rarely found in everyday life at home. Yet these spaces are radically bounded in time, in place, and in the unequal mobility that created them (Sheller, 2016; Di Matteo, 2023). When volunteers return home, the bubble does not dissolve gradually; it ruptures. The resulting "post-volunteering displacement", sadness, disorientation, and even depression, put in evidence the tension between the intensity of care experienced in place and the structural conditions that make it only temporary. What does it mean to build a place of solidarity that, by design, cannot last? And what obligations, ethical, organisational, and even emotional, does that impermanence generate for all involved?

## **Murals Speak: A Temporary Gallery of Place-Based Stories**

*Ilja Simons*  
*Breda University of Applied Sciences*  
*Netherlands*  
[simons.i@buas.nl](mailto:simons.i@buas.nl)

*Kristel Zegers*  
*Esther Peperkamp*

What happens when murals travel beyond their neighbourhood contexts and are placed side by side in a temporary gallery? What becomes visible when they share the same space? This contribution presents a temporary gallery-style display featuring 18 murals from cities and towns across Europe, accompanied by a visual word cloud generated collaboratively with international scholars and students. The gallery originated in a seminar setting

(organised as part of a KreativEU alliance) in which participants were invited to bring an image of a mural from their place of residence and narrate the mural's story, its creation process, and its reception. Each mural image is paired with minimal contextual framing; together, they reveal a plurality of roles, including heritage and memory, protest and illegality, branding and tourism, community expression, and controversy.

The gallery reveals how murals function differently depending on local governance, social tensions, and cultural histories. Placed in shared space, these images surface contested meanings that remain invisible when murals are encountered individually in situ.

At the un-conference track, the display will be recreated as a temporary gallery-style arrangement, inviting participants to move through the visual material and consider what emerges when murals speak across borders. A short oral reflection will situate the work within the ongoing research project "Living Stories: Co-creation and Representation in Murals", which examines how inclusivity and representation take shape in mural-making practices.

By foregrounding spatial encounter and juxtaposition this contribution explores how visual methods can reveal the relational, place-based, and contested functions of murals in tourism and community contexts.

### **Participation as Event: Neighbourhood Micro-Events in Mural Co-Creation**

*Ilja Simons*

*Breda University of Applied Sciences*

*Netherlands*

[simons.i@buas.nl](mailto:simons.i@buas.nl)

*Kristel Zegers*

Community participation is increasingly positioned as central to public art and placemaking initiatives. In practice, however, it unfolds through situated gatherings in which residents, cultural organisations, artists, and housing partners come together to shape a shared wall.

This paper conceptualises mural-making as a sequence of neighbourhood-scale micro-events through which collaboration, representation, and local meaning gradually take shape.

Drawing on participatory observation of multiple residents' meetings in Breda (the Netherlands), conducted in collaboration with Blind Walls Gallery and combined with interviews with artists and other stakeholders, the paper examines how co-creation and representation develop across the mural-making process.

The findings reveal the subtle dynamics that structure these gatherings, such as spatial arrangements and agenda-setting. They show how residents articulate attachment to place, negotiate aesthetic preferences, and express concerns about neighbourhood identity, while cultural organisations experiment with participatory formats to foster dialogue and build local support. Artist perspectives further illustrate how community input is interpreted and translated into visual form, highlighting co-creation as an iterative and relational process.

By analysing these neighbourhood gatherings as micro-events, drawing on critical event studies, the paper argues that they function as relational infrastructures: moments that generate shared attention, emotional energy, and sometimes friction. These place-bound events do not merely precede the mural; they actively shape how it becomes embedded in local narratives and everyday life.

The paper contributes to event studies by offering insights into designing participatory micro-events that support inclusive, context-sensitive public art processes within neighbourhood settings.

## **Gastronomic Tourism and Locavorism in Urban Destinations**

*Melanie Smith*  
*Budapest University of Economics and Business*  
*Hungary*  
[smith.melanie@uni-bge.hu](mailto:smith.melanie@uni-bge.hu)

*Ivett Pinke-Sziva*  
*Orsolya Szakály*  
*Bence Csapody*

Gastronomy has become a major motivation for visiting cities, with local gastronomic experiences helping to enhance visitors' satisfaction and destination image. Attracting tourists who choose local cuisine in an urban destination can help to support circular economy, regenerative agricultural practices and create healthier and more sustainable diets in accordance with the C40 Good Food Cities declaration. There is also a social and cultural imperative for protecting and promoting local food. Such developments are partly reflected in the so-called 'locavorism' movement, which has become a consumer ideology and a form of 'food activism'. The topic is especially worthy of investigation in urban destinations because they tend to be somewhat 'touristified' or 'foodified', resulting in the displacement of traditional and local food outlets. Urban tourists may be lured away from local and authentic food experiences by popular review sites resulting in overcrowding and creating negative impacts for local food chains.

Tourists with a special interest in gastronomy may specifically look for restaurants that use local or seasonal produce, resulting in higher levels of guest satisfaction. Nevertheless, the phenomenon of locavorism is under-researched in urban contexts and city tourism, including the ways in which it can shape food experience (e.g. preferences for local food), how food experience might impact on locavorism (e.g. as an emerging mindset), and how to motivate tourists to feel more commitment toward local food in an urban context. The presentation includes the results of a questionnaire undertaken with 537 urban tourists in Budapest using pre-validated scales on food experience and locavorism. Results indicate that local food is important to respondents, they would prefer to visit restaurants serving local food, and they would be willing to pay more for it. It seems that locavorism acts as both an antecedent and mediator with the potential to influence mindsets, satisfaction, and intention to re-visit and recommend. However, a limitation was that the locavorism scale focused mostly on taste, uniqueness and local economy, but should be expanded to include further elements relating to health and culture.

## **Creative tourism in rural areas: development of business model in a cross-border context**

*Dora Smolčić Jurdana*  
*University of Rijeka*  
*Croatia*  
[doras@fthm.hr](mailto:doras@fthm.hr)

*Elena Rudan*  
[elenar@fthm.hr](mailto:elenar@fthm.hr)

Rural areas are trying to develop into recognizable destinations with a specific offer. Tourists are first of all attracted by the offer of natural values, cultural landscapes and attractions, and this by upgrading them through specific and innovative models. Cultural and creative tourism in such a context is the basis for creating business models that ensure sustainable tourism development in rural areas. In such reflections, it is necessary to observe the elements that

offer new quality, especially including the shaping of the experience and the creation of the experience, which was also analyzed within the framework of the CROCUS project. The possibilities are very different - from the stimulation of accommodation capacities, the development of cultural attractions, gastronomic offer, traditional as well as newly created events and activities.

The paper analyses the possibilities for developing business model of creative tourism in the cross-border area of Matulji (Croatia) and Ilirska Bistrica (Slovenia) by analysing specific case studie. Furthermore, the emphasis is on analysing the perception of the importance and satisfaction of cultural attractions and activities by visitors to the researched cross-border area. The border line used to separate the territories, and on the other hand, its physical disappearance opens up the possibilities of combining the tourist offer by creating business models of creative tourism that give a new value dimension to cross-border tourist destinations. The research includes examining the attitudes of visitors to rural areas, and their attitudes that are extremely important for re-thinking and the implementation of creative rural initiatives with natural and cultural values that must not be undermined by unsustainable solutions of tourism policy makers.

### **Transforming tourism: Challenges and opportunities for Edinburgh the Festival City**

*Sarah Snell*  
*Edinburgh Napier University*  
*United Kingdom*  
[s.snell@napier.ac.uk](mailto:s.snell@napier.ac.uk)

*Mania Moysidou*  
*Pavlos Arvanitis*

Tourism, long positioned as an engine of economic growth, is increasingly scrutinised for the social and ecological costs embedded within its expansionary logic (Nieuwland, 2024; Pappaleore et al., 2025). Degrowth scholarship challenges the assumption that continual growth is inherently desirable, instead advocating for economic restructuring that prioritises wellbeing, equity, and ecological limits over volume-based expansion (Andriotis, 2014; Hall, 2009; Higgins-Desbiolles et al., 2019). Within tourism studies, this perspective reframes overtourism not as a failure of management alone, but as a structural consequence of growth-dependent development models (Kallis, 2011). While overtourism is widely documented, there remains a need for further empirical research examining how degrowth-oriented approaches might be operationalised in established urban destinations (Pappaleore et al., 2025).

Edinburgh provides a critical case study of a festival city (or “festivalised” city according to Hague, 2021) shaped by sustained growth strategies. Attracting over five million visitors annually—approximately ten times its resident population—in 2023 the city generated an estimated £2.25 billion in tourism expenditure (The Edinburgh City Council, 2025). Yet this economic success coincides with mounting pressures on housing, access to public spaces, infrastructure, and community wellbeing. Escalating property prices and the expansion of short-term rental accommodation have intensified residential displacement, contributing to an accommodation crisis and the transformation of the city centre toward tourist-oriented consumption (Wang et al., 2024). These dynamics raise pressing questions about liveability, cultural integrity, and whether Edinburgh has become structurally dependent on tourism growth.

This research investigates overtourism in Edinburgh through a degrowth lens, examining the extent to which emerging policy interventions signal a shift away from growth-centric governance. A qualitative case study methodology is employed. The study undertakes systematic analysis of current tourism and events strategies, planning frameworks, short-term rental legislation, and the forthcoming tourist levy. This is complemented by semi-

structured interviews with policymakers, industry stakeholders, and community representatives to explore competing understandings of value, success, and sustainability. By integrating policy analysis with stakeholder perspectives, the research evaluates whether current and proposed measures constitute incremental regulation within a growth paradigm or represent meaningful movement toward a post-growth tourism model centred on community wellbeing and social resilience.

## **Co-Creating a Participatory Guide for Cross-Border Tourism Governance**

*Vicky Steylaerts*  
*Thomas More University of Applied Sciences*  
*Belgium*  
[vicky.steylaerts@thomasmore.be](mailto:vicky.steylaerts@thomasmore.be)

*Noëlle Verhage*

Co-creation and participatory governance are widely promoted in tourism research and policy as responses to complex coordination challenges involving multiple actors, interests, and governance levels. However, much of the literature focuses on participatory outcomes or tools, while offering limited insight into how such participatory instruments are themselves co-created in practice. This gap is starkly illustrated by cases in which well-intentioned participatory projects fall short because the tools are not collaboratively designed, resulting in mismatches between expectations and execution. This paper addresses this shortfall by examining the participatory development process for a tourism participation guide rather than focusing solely on the outcomes of projects supported by it.

The study takes place in a UNESCO Global Geopark within the Interreg Flanders–Netherlands project (Be)Leefbare Schelde, a cross-border delta region marked by fragmented institutions, strong local identities, and shared ambitions for sustainable tourism. Despite factors like geographic proximity, shared language, and dedicated funding, collaboration is hindered by institutional fragmentation. In response, a participation guide was developed to support participatory and co-creative practices in tourism governance and was deliberately designed to follow the same participatory principles it promotes.

Instead of prescribing a fixed sequence of methods, the guide provides a modular set of participatory design tools that are adaptable to context, actors, and process stages. The study uses a qualitative, practice-based approach that combines needs analysis, interviews, stakeholder meetings, and iterative feedback throughout the guide's development. This enabled ongoing reflection on roles, expectations, and power dynamics. Early application in regional cases helped validate and refine the guide, though long-term impacts were not fully evaluated.

The analysis demonstrates that co-creating a participatory guide is an iterative process of negotiation, translation, and adaptation, rather than a linear planning approach. Local intermediaries bridged policy ambitions and everyday practices, but challenges like participation fatigue and reliance on project funding emerged. By focusing on the participatory development of a governance tool, this paper contributes to debates on participation and co-creation in tourism governance. The findings are relevant to destination managers, policymakers, and practitioners in complex, cross-border tourism contexts who seek practical approaches to collaboration.

## **A model for creating collaborative village homestays: An indigenous Fijian/iTaukei case**

*Michael Tarrant*  
*University of Georgia*  
*United States*  
[tarrant@uga.edu](mailto:tarrant@uga.edu)

*M. Gleason*  
*H. Sykes*  
*Q. Eparama*

For more than a decade, the University of Georgia's Discover Abroad has collaborated with several indigenous Fijian (iTaukei) communities to establish village homestays as a form of voluntourism (see for example <https://FijianHomestays.com>). (Homestay is broadly defined to include small-scale overnight accommodations with local families and/or in culturally authentic environments.) Homestays provide a critical source of revenue at times of crisis, notably when the village's primary income (typically derived from fisheries and agriculture) is affected by environmental events. For example, cyclones Winston (2016) and Yasa (2020) decimated kava crops and fruit trees and affected fish stocks throughout Fiji. Yet, Fiji's tourism industry proved to be resilient, recovering more quickly than its terrestrial and marine environments. Since 2015, cohorts of 10-12 university (non-indigenous) students have engaged in a service-learning opportunity with iTaukei communities to co-create a commercially viable village homestay, with mutual benefits to (1) students and (2) the community. First, it provides students a hands-on, real-world exposure to entrepreneurship in the developing world. This goes beyond cultural awareness and understanding to promote a global skill set that includes not only the business acumen of developing a commercial product, but the fostering of intercultural collaborative partnerships. Second, it provides villages a source of revenue, in particular empowering women (since females run the households) in cash-stricken economies. Each community establishes a homestay committee comprised of elders, women, youth, and church members to manage the marketing, operate logistics, and allocate funds. Most importantly, the model was built on the back of previous successful non-governmental – village collaborations (through a local consultant, Marine Ecology Fiji) and developed at the request of the village. NGOs, charities and foundations in Fiji increasingly acknowledge that a new innovative model beyond traditional aid is needed; one that empowers the very people they intend to help. By bridging income gaps between the genders and providing a reliable source of income after environmental turbulence, the homestays therefore have the potential to foster sustainable livelihoods. The presentation will describe the process by which the collaborations were enabled, the challenges encountered, and the outcomes produced. Applications to other countries/regions will be emphasised.

## **Overtourism as an existential crisis: The case of Noosa Parks Association, Australia**

*Michael Tarrant*  
*University of Georgia*  
*United States*  
[tarrant@uga.edu](mailto:tarrant@uga.edu)

*Tony Wellington*  
*M. Gleason*

As with many tourism destinations globally, Noosa (Queensland, Australia) is experiencing arguably the greatest threat to its resident amenity: overtourism. Established on the basis

that, what is good for residents will be good for tourists, Noosa's development has been largely shaped by grassroots, volunteer groups and perhaps the most important of these is Noosa Parks Association (the state's oldest community-led conservation organisation). For more than 60 years, NPA's involvement in local politics has meant Noosa has become one of the most iconic tourism destinations in Australia: with 35% greenspace, limits on building heights (no development taller than the highest tree), and avoiding big-city symbols such as traffic lights (only two for 60,000 residents), billboards and illuminated signage. Today, however, NPA considers overtourism as an existential crisis, threatening the community's social fabric and way of life. From 2022-24, NPA partnered with the University of Georgia to survey 420 Noosa residents and 1048 visitors. As a proxy for overtourism, a normative model of crowd tolerance (expressed as a willingness to support more or fewer tourists) was adopted. Using Social Exchange Theory, the model assumes a person will perceive the impacts of tourism as positive or negative depending on the extent to which they view visitor levels as under or over a threshold that they expect or support (i.e., their norms or tolerance level). Results showed that residents and visitors differed significantly on several perceived tourism impacts, with long-term residents less favorable to positive impacts than visitors. There was broad consensus across both residents and tourists, and the highest level of agreement, with negative impacts (especially that tourism contributes to traffic and parking congestion, and higher prices). The lowest levels of agreement with positive tourism impacts were found for "overtourists" (respondents who supported a fewer number of tourists in future). The presentation will describe the overtourism crisis to Noosa's way of life, the role of NPA (including research findings), and implications for sustainable destination management in the context of the Quadruple Bottom Line (including efforts that enable tourism communities to grow well using a guardianship ethos and collective action of Gifts and Gains).

### **The 'Uberisation' of work in the Brazilian hospitality sector: An Even More Precarious Form of Outsourcing?**

*Angela Teberga de Paula*  
*University of Brasília*  
*Brazil*  
[angela.teberga@gmail.com](mailto:angela.teberga@gmail.com)

*Cecília Ulisses Frade dos Reis*

Although the platform economy has become popular in the hotel market, especially in reservation management functions for residences, such as Airbnb (Cansoy & Schor, 2023), the massive use of applications for workforce management in the hotel industry, in which workers would be summoned through a digital platform to work at hotels, is unknown. Therefore, the aim of this paper is to investigate the impact of adopting flexible hiring models on applications for Brazilian workers. This is qualitative research with a Marxist theoretical framework. We will use bibliographic and empirical research techniques, through the analysis of official employment data, job advertisements research, and interviews with workers, unions, and hotel managers in Brazil. Specifically, we will conduct a study on the B2BHotel application, which is unprecedented in Brazilian territory, and whose primary product is the intermediation of labor for work in hotels. Research indicates that the platformisation of work is of interest to the hotel market, which "should be flexible and vary, based on demand" (El Hajal & Rowson, 2021, p. 189). The use of algorithmic management, normally associated with the platform economy, while it may bring operational benefits to the hotel business, implies increased precariousness for workers (Giousmpasoglou, 2024). At the same time, we consider that the incipient platformisation of work in the hotel industry can be explained by: a) quality assurance and compliance with occupancy/revenue indicators; b) company trust in its employees, who handle guests' personal belongings; c) the average

salary of employees in the Brazilian hotel industry is significantly low, making the risk of migrating from fixed contracts to other modalities not worthwhile. In 2022, the average salary of housekeepers (U\$ 331) was 50% lower than the average for the entire Brazilian economy (U\$ 649) (MTE, 2026). This incipience cannot hide the fact that work in the hotel industry is already highly flexible, especially through outsourcing, which is traditionally used for wage reduction and work precariousness. Thus, research on the use of an application for worker recruitment will allow us to understand the impacts that platforms can cause in the sector, as a way to intensify work precariousness.

## **Sustainable Tourism Indicators as institutional governance trust tools in systems thinking**

*Conor McTiernan*  
*Atlantic Technological University*  
*Ireland*  
[conor.mctiernan@atu.ie](mailto:conor.mctiernan@atu.ie)

*Patrice Duffy*

As systems thinking conceptualises tourism as an open, adaptive yet complex system characterised by nonlinear loops between interdependent actors, sustainable tourism scholarship emphasises the capability of such a framework to address the impacts of climate pressures. Studies also note the pivotal governance role that institutional trust plays within such systems, as it enables co-ordination between partners thereby reducing risk during periods of crisis, ultimately leading to stabilising behaviours. When risk perceptions are heightened during climate crises, the absence of institutional competence can trigger reinforcing feedback loops of precautionary behaviour, inaction and erode legitimacy. In response, systems thinking contends the presence of institutional trust acts as a stabilising mechanism, fostering inter-personal and organisational trust between partners, thereby supporting adaptation and resilience to climate risks. Yet few studies explore how such institutional trust is formed, communicated and developed between partners.

This paper argues that sustainable tourism indicators can function as trusted governance instruments to system partners when they are perceived as credible, transparent and legitimate. Here trust-based decision making becomes a social norm and indicator systems operate as signals of institutional reliability, encouraging accountability and commitment to SDGs. Such affective trust enables system partners to proactively and communally collaborate to address climate change, adhere to legislation such as the EUs Green Claims Directive and mitigate against operational greenwashing. Indeed, the indicators do not simply measure performance within the system, they provide trusted evidence of institutional capability to govern complexity and risk, while balancing economic, social and environmental priorities.

Such trusted indicator systems contribute to system resilience by enforcing governance feedback loops. Here institutional trust reduces asymmetries between partners, accelerating shared learning and enabling collective decision making. Ergo, the indicator systems' governance underpins vertical trust between authorities and practitioners, and horizontal trust between stakeholders and their communities. By integrating institutionally trusted indicator systems into loop diagrams, tourism managers and stakeholders can model how trust moderates perceptions of risk and encourages benevolence-based trust between partners. By so doing, the indicator system surpasses its role in technical monitoring, to emerging as an essential governance mechanism of institutional trust in an era of increasingly environmental uncertainty.

## **Rethinking the interconnections of platformisation and workers' precarity through destination-level system thinking**

*Maja Turnšek*  
*University of Maribor*  
*Slovenia*  
[maja.turnsek@um.si](mailto:maja.turnsek@um.si)

*Maja Breznik*  
*Peace Institute*  
[maja.breznik@mirovni-institut.si](mailto:maja.breznik@mirovni-institut.si)

*Blaž Rodič*  
[blaz.rodic1@um.si](mailto:blaz.rodic1@um.si)

*Jerneja Šavrič*  
[jerneja.savric@um.si](mailto:jerneja.savric@um.si)

The paper takes a system thinking approach to reflect on results of two interconnected research projects on working conditions in tourism in Slovenia. The two research projects were theoretically based on the labour process theory and have focused on the issue of precarisation of tourism workers. First, in the project “the future of social dialogue in the platform economy: The case of Slovenia” (grant No. J5-4586) we analysed food delivery platformisation in Slovenia. The research methods included desk research, online survey (n=93 of platform food delivery workers), participatory observation of workers' union activities and in-depth interviews with platform workers in Ljubljana (n=20). Second, in the project “Working conditions and job quality in hospitality and tourism: a comparative analysis with recommendations” (grant No. V5-24019) we included two focus groups and 31 interviews with stakeholders at two municipalities with the highest share of tourism employment in Slovenia: Piran-Pirano and Kranjska Gora, including workers, trade unions, managers, destination management and local government. Both projects identified the important role of tourism platformisation in precarisation of tourism work. However, the interconnections are complex, including both the aspects of platformisation of work and platformisation of housing conditions. We analyse such interrelations holistically as part of a destination-level system and with the aim to identify the potential “positive tipping points” that can direct local and national policies on tourism development, its platformisation and working conditions in the sector.

## **Rethinking ‘travel’ in the Anthropocene: modes of mobility on a damaged planet**

*Rodanthi Tzanelli*  
*University of Leeds*  
*United Kingdom*  
[r.tzanelli@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:r.tzanelli@leeds.ac.uk)

My presentation focuses on environmental imaginaria, a conceptual framework developed to explore how planetary crises—particularly those arising from climate catastrophe—are mediated through physical, virtual, and audiovisual sites. Ranging from bioclimatic domes to museum-like technology and science establishments in which climates are recreated, they comprise forms of environmental animation by imaginative design. As symbolic sites, they preserve traces of endangered species and habitats, evoking spectral imaginaries of loss, ecocide, and the possibility of hospitality toward more-than-human life (Tzanelli, 2025). Although some prominent environmental imaginaria such as Tropical World, Leeds, Klimahaus, Bremen, the Eden Project, or the Museum of Tomorrow, Rio de Janeiro, are not

tourist destinations, they encourage a speculative engagement with an at-risk planetary bio-cultural heritage. Borrowing from thanatic/dark (Seraphin, George Korstanje, 2024), and regenerative optics alike (Ateljevic & Peric, 2025), they promote complex entanglements of indigenous floral/faunal systems and local heritage lifeworlds. Overall, they promote four styles of human tourist-like mobility, with varied associations with distinct environmental attitudes toward climate change—catastrophism, gradualism, and denialism. This unmasks the complexity of the mobile subjects' (post-)biopolitical signatures as classed, gendered, racial and more.

Thus, as much as such projects showcase organised positive action in their staging by epistemic communities of climate experts, tourism stakeholders, artistic communities and exhibition designers, they also posit questions of physical and pedagogical access. The varied and unequal distribution of economic, social and cultural capital across tentative global audiences may remap planetary inequalities in leisure and tourism.

### **Does nature decide? Power dynamics and the co-creation of African safari experiences**

*Lisa Vebber*

*Pennsylvania State University*

*United States*

[llv5069@psu.edu](mailto:llv5069@psu.edu)

Every African safari drive begins with a shared sense of anticipation, shaped by the promise of close wildlife encounters and nature's unpredictability. While this uncertainty is celebrated as central to the experience, it also creates the conditions for both delight and disappointment—and for practices that can place pressure on already vulnerable ecosystems. This presentation examines how safari experiences are co-created through complex interactions between tourists, guides, and environmental forces, and explores the extent to which “nature” truly decides what unfolds.

The accelerating loss of biodiversity in African protected areas is a crisis, driven by climate change and unsustainable practices such as off-road driving and wildlife crowding. Although weather and wildlife movement remain beyond human control, many influential elements of the safari experience are shaped well before a visitor enters a protected area, through expectations, narratives, and power relations embedded in tourism encounters.

Central to this co-creation process is the safari guide, whose influence extends beyond a single game drive. Guides act as interpreters of landscapes, wildlife behavior, conservation ethics, and local cultures, profoundly shaping tourists' perceptions of the destination and appropriate conduct within it. These narratives are carried home and shared through social networks, influencing future tourism demand and reinforcing—or challenging—norms around sustainability. Despite this influence, guides' roles as community representatives, educators, and stewards of biodiversity are often undervalued, insufficiently supported, and rarely examined in tourism research.

Focusing on Western tourists, this study situates safari encounters within broader socio-economic, cultural, and historical contexts. Persistent inequalities rooted in colonial histories create non-coercive power dynamics between tourists and guides, shaping ethical decision-making, rule compliance, and wildlife interactions. Drawing on the Approach Inhibition Theory of Power, the research explores how perceived power asymmetries influence behavior during safari activities.

Using a mixed-methods approach that combines online surveys, semi-structured interviews, and direct observations, this study examines how authority, responsibility, and collaboration are negotiated in real time. By highlighting the guide's pivotal role in co-creating sustainable safari experiences, the presentation offers insights to inform collaborative management and community-centered strategies aimed at protecting both biodiversity and the local livelihoods that depend on wildlife tourism.

## **Resistance and the Co-Creation of Tourism in Brazilian Favelas**

*Bernardo de La Vega Vinolo*  
*Oxford Brookes University*  
*United Kingdom*  
[19284682@brookes.ac.uk](mailto:19284682@brookes.ac.uk)

*Rosa Codina*

*Fabian Frenzel*  
[fabian.frenzel@uni-trier.de](mailto:fabian.frenzel@uni-trier.de)

This paper aims to discuss the interplay of co-creation and resistance in the production of tourism in community-based heritage destinations situated within contexts of social vulnerability. In these contexts, some communities pursue tourism activities to provide additional income and increase local visibility, which are seen as routes to preserving local practices and material cultures while supporting the long-term resilience of the communities. Collective practices can also serve as socially negotiated platforms of identity re-affirmation and territorial resistance through which counter-narratives are mobilised and documented. But tourism development remains controversial, as the tourism industry remains structured by asymmetrical power relations which bring the pressures of capital manifested through external agents. Indeed, to some groups, resistance to tourism seems necessary to prevent tendencies of appropriation of heritage and broader cultural assets in tourism development. In order to balance tourism benefits with the threats of external interference, such as local disruptions and identity loss, communities have adopted a variety of strategies in their dealings with tourism, negotiating tourism meanings, limits, and uses. While sharing common organisational features, they present different perspectives and levels of acceptance regarding tourism adoption, shaped by particular local heritage manifestations, cultural assets, and economic ambitions. Some embrace tourism as a permanent and strategic tool for visibility, whereas others adopt more selective and temporary approaches. Drawing from an ethnographic investigation in favela communities in Brazil, this paper presents examples of the social use of tourism in these territories and examines the various tourism co-creation strategies developed to both ensure local benefits and mitigate social impacts. In doing so, it analyses how co-creation in tourism is infused with collective practices of resistance, where community actors take an active voice to redefine tourism governance and reclaim their agency in shaping their own future.

## **Thai Influencers, Community Co-creation and Rural Destination-Making in Hokkaido**

*Rujirat Vinitphol*  
*Aoyama Gakuin University*  
*Japan*  
[rujirat@sccs.aoyama.ac.jp](mailto:rujirat@sccs.aoyama.ac.jp)

As Japan experiences a renewed surge of overtourism along its “Golden Route” (Tokyo–Kyoto–Osaka), many rural municipalities face the opposite problem: demographic decline, weak visitor flows, and shrinking local economies. This paper examines how transnational social media influencers work with local actors to build new destinations in peripheral Japan, focusing on the Thai inbound market. It asks how influencer–community collaborations can help redirect tourist flows away from saturated urban circuits and support more resilient, community-anchored tourism futures.

The analysis draws on ethnographic fieldwork conducted in 2024 and in-depth interviews with municipal officials, tourism practitioners and Thai influencers. It develops a comparative case study of two Hokkaido municipalities: Chippubetsu Town and Kushiro City. The

“Chippubetsu model” is built around the long-term engagement of a single Thai influencer who manages the “Hokkaido Diary” Facebook page. Living in the town, she participates in everyday community life and turns mundane routines into appealing content for Thai audiences, cultivating parasocial relationships and a sense of familiarity at a distance. This collaboration has generated small-scale “rural lifestyle” tours and repeat visits, positioning Chippubetsu as a micro-destination for Thai tourists seeking slow, everyday Japan. The “Kushiro model” is organised through the Friends from Thailand (FFT) programme, which brings small groups of Thai volunteers for brief stays. This scheme produces intermittent bursts of social media content and symbolic ties, but its rotational design makes it harder to build narrative continuity, sustained community engagement or clearly defined tourism products. As a result, the visibility and tourism impact of Kushiro’s experiments are more fragile and uneven. Putting these trajectories side by side, the paper treats influencers as mediators in a creative culture-formation process where local actors, influencers and prospective visitors negotiate place meanings, everyday practices and imagined futures. It argues that sustainable outcomes depend less on follower numbers than on continuity over time, the depth of co-creative engagement and the capacity of local institutions to support and govern these relationships.

### **Placemaking through Arts Tourism: A Local Community Perspective**

*Ives Vodanovic Lukic*

*Institute for Tourism*

*Croatia*

[ives.vodanovic@iztzg.hr](mailto:ives.vodanovic@iztzg.hr)

The aim of this paper is to examine the role of arts tourism, conceptualized through the framework of placemaking, particularly arts festivals, in the development of small settlements in Croatia from the perspective of the local community. The impetus for the research arose from the issue of over-tourism on one hand, and from the opportunities offered by the creative use of art in the tourism development of secondary destinations on the other. Five case studies were selected based on the presence of specific forms of arts tourism: Grožnjan (music), Motovun (film), Ogulin (literature), Zagvozd (theatre), and Ernestinovo (visual arts).

The study focuses on the perceptions of local residents, surveyed through a face-to-face questionnaire administered to a systematic random sample ( $n = 275$ ). Data were analyzed using descriptive, inferential and multivariate statistical methods, including non-parametric tests and exploratory factor analysis.

The results indicate a high level of local satisfaction with arts tourism across all settlements and a strong perceived contribution of festivals to local development. Within the framework of social exchange theory (SET), perceived benefits clearly outweigh perceived costs. The most significant positive impacts include promoting the place as a tourist destination, improving its image, enhancing the perception of uniqueness, providing leisure opportunities for residents, and encouraging interaction between locals and visitors. Factor analysis identified three dimensions of perceived benefits (socio-cultural, spatial-environmental and economic), with socio-cultural benefits most strongly perceived. Negative impacts are primarily associated with spatial-environmental pressures, particularly car traffic, lack of parking lots and crowding, alongside concerns about rising living costs and real estate prices. Factor analysis of negative impacts also revealed three dimensions (socio-cultural, spatial-environmental and economic), with spatial-environmental costs perceived most strongly and socio-cultural costs least strongly. Overall, positive impacts were perceived as approximately twice as strong as negative ones, with the balance of effects clearly dominant in the socio-cultural sphere.

The scientific contribution of the paper arises from applying a theoretical and methodological framework based on the concept of placemaking and social exchange theory to examine the role of arts-based tourism, particularly arts festivals, in the development of smaller settlements in Croatia.

### **Urban Tourism and Festivals as Soft Power: Negotiating the Borderline between Multiculturalism and Assimilation in Kowloon City, Hong Kong**

*Thanakarn Bella Vongvisitsin*  
*Hong Kong Metropolitan University*  
*China*  
[btvongvi@hkmu.edu.hk](mailto:btvongvi@hkmu.edu.hk)

*Chia-Chi Chloe Yin*

Global cities, as migration hubs, embody cosmopolitan ideals wherein diverse ethnic communities enhance the city's allure and unique character. Migrants are attracted to these cities by prospects for social mobility and economic advancement, and have long been integral to urban development, significantly contributing to local economies. Policymakers, meanwhile, seek to promote the integration of diverse ethnic groups at the local level while tackling discrimination and social exclusion in wider society. Ethnic minorities, especially those from the Global South, are often viewed as marginalized groups due to limited access to resources, racial hierarchies, and structural socioeconomic inequality. While most migration studies take Global North territories as their primary sites and heavily emphasize refugees from the Global South, this study focuses on the comparatively understudied South–South context.

In liberal societies, racial inclusion is often framed through the ideals of multiculturalism and social justice, with an emphasis on equitable public participation. By contrast, collectivist societies tend to prioritize social harmony and often rely on assimilationist approaches that require compliance with majority norms. As a special administrative region of the Chinese mainland, Hong Kong operates under the 'one country, two systems' framework while striving to maintain its international status as 'Asia's World City.' Given the city's colonial past and its transition to Chinese governance, this study addresses a key knowledge gap within the predicament between these two paradigms. Focusing on Kowloon City, known as 'Little Thailand' and home to generations of Thai migrants, this paper aims to understand how tourism and festivals shape their negotiations with authorities and the wider Hong Kong society.

The study employs multiple qualitative ethnographic methods. Analyzing official documents, news reports, and feasibility studies on urban redevelopment, this study traces the evolution of Kowloon City through the lens of authorities and examines how urbanization affects the livelihoods of the Thai ethnic group, while positioning Thai ethnic culture as a tourism asset of Hong Kong. Moreover, the study investigates ethnic minority experiences through observations of everyday life and Thai festivals, and in-depth interviews with community members to understand the role of tourism and festivals in ethnic minority inclusion.

## **Overcoming rural mobility challenges in times of uncontested poly crises**

*Beatrice Waleghwa*  
*Dalarna University*  
*Sweden*  
[bwg@du.se](mailto:bwg@du.se)

The question of how rural tourism regions can transition from the current high-carbon hegemony of automobile use to a low-carbon future is a salient issue in the context of the present time, which is characterised by converging crises, including climate change and biodiversity loss. The present paper comprises vignettes drawn from the author's doctoral research, which focused on the exploration of sustainable mobility in rural tourism areas. The overarching research question that guided the study was as follows: How can rural tourism regions promote sustainable mobility? To examine this question, the empirical investigation focused on four remote rural tourism areas in Sweden: Sälen; Malung-Sälen; Älvdalen; and Åre. A mixed-methods approach was employed, integrating both qualitative (e.g., interviews, mapping) and quantitative (surveys) techniques to address the objectives outlined in the publications that make up the thesis. The findings of the thesis demonstrate that a key impediment to the promotion of sustainable mobility in rural tourism settings is the presence of a complex set of transport-related challenges, what can be termed a crisis of uncontested poly-challenges. The automobile has been identified as the primary catalyst of this crisis. Notwithstanding, the findings from the thesis also highlight how Public Participation Geographic Information Systems (PPGIS) – a participatory land use planning method – can contribute to a deeper understanding of the poly-challenges and aid in sustainable mobility planning by engaging the public in that planning to find collaborative solutions. Concepts such as wicked problems, monomodalism and the theory of social representations are employed to contextualize the thesis findings within the broader ongoing scientific discourse on sustainable mobility, with particular reference to the challenges of transitioning to a low-carbon transport future.

## **The Triadic Conflict: Negotiating Preservation, Tourism, and Livability in Edinburgh's Urban WHS**

*Alexandra Witte*  
*Edinburgh Napier University*  
*United Kingdom*  
[a.witte@napier.ac.uk](mailto:a.witte@napier.ac.uk)

*Ellis Urquhart*  
*Jenny Bruce*

Gustaffson and Ripp (2022) observe the diversity of conflicts emerging in the context of World Heritage cities and urban transformation. In Edinburgh's World Heritage Site, which encompasses the Old and New Towns, the UNESCO's mandate for heritage preservation intersects with pressures of global tourism and complex urban systems that are home to heterogeneous local communities.

As research identifies a critical need to balance conservation with commodification (Smith, 2006), the role of urban tourism as a primary driver of transformation remains a central point of contestation (Jang & Park, 2020). Edinburgh exemplifies the friction between heritage as a museumised asset of 'Outstanding Universal Value' and heritage as a lived urban reality framed by the demands the visitor economy places on both the city's physical and social infrastructure. These frictions manifest in high-profile controversies such as large-scale hotel conversions (e.g. W Hotel or the Royal High School hotel proposal), the privatization of

public space like the Princes Street Gardens for seasonal festivals, and the proliferation of short-term visitor accommodation.

The latest Management Plan for The Old and New Towns of Edinburgh WHS (2024–2035) explicitly identifies the site’s vulnerability to "unsympathetic development" and residents’ perception that the “WHS is being developed solely for the benefit of tourists and without any real consideration for the needs of locals”. These concerns highlight a triadic conflict wherein commercial imperatives of a global tourism economy, UNESCO’s preservation mandates and residents’ demand for a functional, lived-in city intersect and collide.

Through a critical discourse analysis of planning applications, council responses, and media coverage, this study explores the mechanisms of negotiation, power, and prioritisation, asking how key actors (City Council, developers, UNESCO) frame 'Heritage Value' to justify or contest tourism-centric infrastructure, and how these framings silence or incorporate resident voices. Through this analysis, the project examines how institutional hierarchies and power (im)balances dictate the relationship between heritage mandates, lived urban spaces, and tourism, offering new insights into the challenges of community participation within living World Heritage sites.

## **Collaborative Crisis Mitigation through Upcycled Foods and Marketplace Morality in Hospitality**

*Tian Ye*

*Leeds Beckett University*

*United Kingdom*

[t.ye@leedsbeckett.ac.uk](mailto:t.ye@leedsbeckett.ac.uk)

In an era defined by intersecting ecological and social crises, the hospitality sector must transition from extractive practices to regenerative solutions that foster community wellbeing. Upcycled foods—utilizing ingredients destined for waste—represent a vital circular economy response to resource scarcity; however, effectively engaging the community in this collaborative sustainability effort remains a challenge. Drawing on the framework of marketplace morality and signaling theory, this research investigates how hospitality providers can co-create value and communicate ethical responsibility through sustainability message appeals, fostering a shared commitment to crisis mitigation with consumers.

Two quantitative, scenario-based experimental studies were conducted with US consumers recruited via Prolific. Study 1 utilizes a three-condition between-subjects design (message appeal: environmental vs. social vs. control). Participants were randomly assigned to one of the three conditions, in which they viewed a restaurant initiative featuring upcycled foods accompanied by the corresponding message appeal. They then completed a short survey measuring moral perceptions of the restaurant, attitudes and behavioral intentions to visit. Study 2 builds upon this methodology by introducing restaurant type as a critical boundary condition, employing a multi-factorial design to compare consumer responses across healthy versus hedonic restaurant settings.

Results indicate that both appeals significantly enhance the moral perception of restaurants, transforming the provider-consumer relationship from transactional to relational. By signaling a commitment to addressing global crises, these appeals foster favorable attitudes and supportive behavioral intentions. Notably, this morality-based halo effect is most pronounced in hedonic settings, suggesting that “indulgent” spaces can be effectively repurposed as sites for ethical engagement and sustainable education. This study contributes to the dialogue on regenerative tourism by demonstrating how specific message appeals can bridge the gap between hospitality operations and consumer participation. It also offers practical pathways for “localising and socialising tourism”, helping to position waste reduction not merely as an operational practice but as a shared moral responsibility embedded in collective norms.

## **Shame, spectacle and tourist gaze: The appeal of the "Unbeautiful"**

*Konstantina Zerva*

*University of Girona*

*Spain*

[konstantina.zerva@udg.edu](mailto:konstantina.zerva@udg.edu)

Traditionally, tourism studies have been inextricably linked to the pursuit of beauty, focusing on harmonious architecture, scenic landscapes, and the romanticization of places to ensure customer satisfaction. However, this "aesthetic democratization" often ignores the "shadow" of beauty: ugliness. This paper, "Narrating the Unpleasant: 'Ugliness' as a Resource in Tourism Research," proposes a shift by reframing ugliness not as a failure to be camouflaged, but as a complex, transformative resource for a more authentic and ethical industry.

The research highlights a systematic gap in literature, where "unnecessary beautification" devalues areas with hidden aesthetic value and overlooks "borderline experiences" between beauty and ugliness. By exploring the "Paradox of Ugliness," the study explains how aesthetically negative experiences can be simultaneously repulsive and compelling, generating a form of "pleasure" through cognitive challenge and disruption. Ugliness is presented as a multifaceted tool of power—offering freedom from urban control, providing a critique of social injustice, and serving as a "brutal fact of existence" that reflects the true complexity of the human condition.

Central to this theoretical framework is the classification of three distinct "ugly" experiences: the "Ugly" (shocking discomfort), the "Beaugly" (unremarkable violation of expectations), and the "Ugbeaful". The latter represents a pivotal opportunity where tourists reinterpret discomfort and strangeness as "authenticity," leading to an unconventional aesthetic pleasure.

Ultimately, the paper advocates for a "Second Gaze" that moves beyond constructed tourism fantasies to confront the "uncomfortable" or "ugly" aspects of culture. By adopting a less romanticized, "anti-marketing" approach, the industry can include marginalized narratives and foster a "Moral Gaze" that encourages reflexive engagement with past disasters and current inequalities. Embracing ugliness thus becomes a sincere path toward a less "harmful" and more ethically resonant tourist experience.