

# Authenticity, Cultural Heritage and Technology-Mediated Tourism Experiences

## Track Chair

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## Track Description

Tourism experiences are increasingly shaped through dynamic interactions between cultural heritage, technological mediation, social values, and innovation ecosystems. As destinations and organisations adopt immersive technologies, artificial intelligence, platform economies, and digitally mediated storytelling, fundamental questions emerge regarding authenticity, identity, meaning-making, and the social sustainability of tourism and event experiences.

This track explores how authenticity is constructed, negotiated, experienced, and transformed across contemporary tourism and hospitality contexts. Moving beyond traditional object-based understandings of authenticity, the track welcomes critical and interdisciplinary perspectives examining existential, relational, performative, and co-created authenticity within both physical and digitally mediated environments. Particular attention is given to how emerging technologies reshape visitor engagement with culture, heritage, communities, and place identity.

The track also examines the nexus between authenticity and innovation, recognising that technological advancement and experiential innovation are not inherently contradictory to authentic experiences. Instead, digital technologies, immersive environments, creative industries, and experience design may enhance emotional connection, cultural understanding, inclusion, and social sustainability when implemented responsibly and collaboratively.

Contributions are encouraged from tourism, hospitality, events, heritage studies, consumer behaviour, marketing, sociology, human-computer interaction, cultural studies, and related disciplines. The track welcomes conceptual, empirical, methodological, and industry-oriented research that advances understanding of how authentic, meaningful, and socially sustainable experiences can be designed and governed within evolving smart tourism ecosystems.

This track welcomes conceptual, empirical, methodological, and industry-oriented submissions examining authenticity, cultural heritage, technology-mediated experiences, and innovation in tourism, hospitality, and events. Cross-disciplinary contributions from tourism studies, heritage studies, marketing, consumer behaviour, sociology, psychology, human-computer interaction, media and communication studies, cultural studies, and related fields are encouraged, including critical perspectives, comparative studies, methodological innovations, and academia-industry collaborations.

## Indicative Topics

### Authenticity, Meaning and Experience

- Authenticity and meaningful tourism experiences
- Existential, constructive and performative authenticity
- Place identity, memory and emotional connection
- Visitor emotions, memory formation and behavioural outcomes
- Wellbeing, belonging and quality of life outcomes
- Experience design for transformative and regenerative tourism

### Cultural Heritage, Communities and Representation

- Cultural heritage interpretation and storytelling
- Digital heritage and virtual tourism
- Destination branding, identity and representation
- Indigenous knowledge, cultural stewardship and community voices
- Social sustainability and community-centred tourism development
- Ethical issues in staging, commodifying and digitising culture
- Co-creation of experiences with communities and visitors

### Technology-Mediated and Immersive Experiences

- Technology-mediated tourism and event experiences
- AI, XR, VR and immersive cultural experiences
- Hybrid, phygital and immersive event experiences
- Smart tourism and meaningful visitor engagement
- Social media, influencers and perceptions of authenticity
- Technology adoption and visitor experience transformation

### Innovation and Future Experience Systems

- Creative tourism and experiential innovation
- Innovation and authenticity in tourism experience systems
- Human-centred design in tourism and hospitality experiences
- Future cultural and heritage experiences towards Tourism 2040
- Innovative methods for examining lived and mediated experiences