

Cruise Tourism and Hospitality Experience Management Track

Track Chair: Professor Alexis Papathanassis

Rector, Professor Cruise Management and eTourism at Bremerhaven University of Applied Sciences, Germany

Rationale and relevance to the conference theme:

The cruise sector's resilience has been repeatedly tested and proven over the last few decades. Cruise tourism successfully recovered from an unprecedented COVID19-induced, two-year 'no-sail', economic recession in its source markets, as well as numerous reputation-critical incidents, challenging its safety image and its acceptance as a sustainable form of travel. This resilience can, to a large part, be attributed to the sector's innovation readiness and investments in emerging technologies throughout its entire value-chain and business-networks.

As we approach the end of this decade, the resilience and mindset of the sector are put to the test yet again. The net-zero-imperative, in conjunction to an ever-increasing web of regulatory restrictions and standards, intra- and extra-sectoral competition, operational complexity, staff shortages and evolving guest expectations, all challenge the current sector's evolutionary trajectory and business paradigm. A regenerative and human-centric model of tourism-production and -experience drive the sector's transformation and will ultimately define its future.

Thus, in this track we encourage submissions that explore how cruise tourism can create positive impact through innovation while fostering equity, inclusion and sustainability. We invite conceptual, empirical and methodological papers and encourage cross-disciplinary approaches. Research may span marketing, management, sociology, economics, technology, ethics and public policy, and may draw on qualitative, quantitative or mixed methodologies. We also welcome developmental papers, comparative studies and practitioner-scholar collaborations.

Expanded Themes and Topics

1. Smart Technologies and Digital Transformation in Cruise Ecosystems

- AI-diffusion and personalisation in cruise hospitality services
- Smart ships, digital twins, and maritime data ecosystems
- Automation and robotics onboard
- Blockchain potential for and use-cases in cruise tourism
- Data analytics and passenger management
- Smart port-ship integration and digital maritime infrastructures
- Cybersecurity risks in cruise tourism systems
- Virtual and augmented reality in pre-, during-, and post-cruise experiences

2. Human-Centred Cruise Experiences, Guest Wellbeing and Service Innovation

- Human-centred service design in cruise hospitality
- Passenger wellbeing and evolving cruise demographics
- Experience co-creation between guests, crew, and destinations
- Inclusivity and accessibility in the cruise experience
- Memorable experiences, authenticity and immersion in cruise tourism
- Personalisation and experiential marketing in cruise tourism
- Emerging cruise market segments and changing guest expectations

3. Regenerative and Net-Zero Cruise Tourism

- Decarbonization pathways and net-zero strategies for cruise fleets
- Alternative fuels and green propulsion technologies
- Circular economy practices in cruise operations
- Regenerative tourism models for cruise destinations
- Waste management, water systems, and environmental innovations onboard
- Measuring environmental impacts and sustainability performance
- Cruise tourism and biodiversity management
- Environmental governance and regulatory compliance in maritime tourism
- Port-destination collaboration for sustainable cruise operations
- Life-cycle management of cruise fleets

4. Workforce Transformation and Organizational Resilience

- Workforce shortages and recruitment strategies in cruise tourism
- Crew wellbeing, working conditions, and organisational support
- Skills development for digital and sustainable cruise operations
- Automation and the future of maritime hospitality employment
- Diversity, equity, and inclusion in cruise workforce management
- Crew-guest interaction dynamics
- Training innovations & competency frameworks for cruise staff
- Automation and the future of employment at sea
- Resilience and crisis readiness in cruise operations

5. Governance, Policy, and Cruise Tourism Ecosystems

- Governance models and regulatory frameworks in cruise tourism
- Collaboration between cruise lines, ports, and destinations
- Overtourism/Overcrowding and cruise destination management
- Corporate responsibility and ethical governance in cruise tourism
- Economic impacts and value distribution within cruise tourism ecosystems
- Port / Destination competitiveness and regional cruise tourism development strategies

6. Cruise Tourism Futures

- Forecasting and / or scenario planning for cruise tourism futures
- Emerging consumer trends shaping cruise tourism futures
- Climate change implications for cruise itineraries and operations
- Technological disruptions and the future cruise experience
- Post-growth and regenerative tourism futures
- Society, culture and the long-term acceptance of cruise tourism
- Societal acceptance and legitimacy of cruise tourism