

Cultural Heritage and Tourist Perception Track

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Rationale and relevance to the conference theme:

Cultural heritage tourism represents one of the most powerful intersections between culture, identity, sustainability, and visitor experience within contemporary tourism systems. As destinations increasingly move toward the Tourism 2040 vision of human-centered, smart, and regenerative tourism ecosystems, cultural heritage environments must negotiate complex relationships between preservation, technological innovation, community wellbeing, and evolving tourist expectations. Cultural heritage spaces, including archaeological landscapes, historic cities, sacred sites, museums, cultural routes, performing traditions, and living cultural practices, are no longer perceived as static representations of the past. Instead, they function as dynamic cultural ecosystems shaped by visitor perception, emotional engagement, community narratives, and digital mediation. These environments embody both tangible and intangible cultural values, making tourist perception central to heritage sustainability and cultural continuity.

Tourists actively co-create cultural heritage meaning through storytelling, interpretation, digital sharing, and behavioural choices. Their expectations influence authenticity negotiation, interpretation strategies, conservation priorities, and destination reputation. At the same time, heritage destinations are increasingly confronted with challenges such as cultural commodification, climate vulnerability, and the erosion of local cultural identities. These pressures highlight the need for perception-informed, culturally sensitive, and regenerative approaches to heritage tourism development. This track examines how cultural understanding, visitor perception, economic frameworks, smart technologies, and community participation can collectively support resilient and adaptive cultural heritage tourism systems.

Intended audience and scholarly contribution

The track welcomes conceptual, empirical, and methodological contributions from tourism studies, heritage management, anthropology, conservation science, psychology, sociology, geography, digital humanities, economics, and cultural studies. By integrating cultural meaning, perception, governance, marketing, and economic perspectives, the track aims to advance holistic approaches to managing cultural heritage tourism in a rapidly transforming global tourism landscape.

Expanded Themes and Topics

Tourist Perception and Cultural Experience

- Construction of authenticity, emotional engagement, and cultural identity in heritage experiences.
- Influence of perception on satisfaction, loyalty, cultural awareness, and responsible visitor behaviour.
- Impacts of crowding, commercialization, accessibility, and visitor expectations on cultural heritage.
- Spiritual, pilgrimage, gastronomic heritage, indigenous knowledge system and identity-based engagement within sacred and cultural landscapes.
- Value Co-creation in cultural heritage tourism.

Cultural Governance, Policy and Stakeholder Dynamics

- Cultural governance frameworks for conservation, tourism development, and community participation.
- Institutional partnerships and policy innovation in cultural heritage destination development.
- Multi-stakeholder collaboration, conflicts, and participatory cultural heritage planning.
- Destination management, regulatory challenges, and ethical cultural heritage governance.
- Power and Politics in Cultural Heritage Tourism.
- UNESCO World Heritage Sites Management.

Smart Cultural Heritage, Interpretation and Experience

- Smart visitor management, carrying capacity monitoring, and behavioural nudging in cultural sites.
- AR/VR, artificial intelligence, immersive storytelling, and digital mediation in cultural heritage interpretation.
- Inclusive cultural interpretation, digital accessibility, and ethical dimensions of virtual reconstruction.
- Role of digital platforms and social media in shaping cultural heritage perception.

Cultural Heritage Tourism Marketing and Destination Competitiveness

- Cultural storytelling, branding, and experience marketing for heritage destinations.
- Digital marketing, social media influence, and cultural destination image formation.
- Cultural circuits and strategic promotion and positioning of heritage tourism.
- Market segmentation, Target Market, cultural visitor engagement strategies, and destination competitiveness.

Sustainable and Regenerative Cultural Heritage Futures

- Regenerative cultural heritage tourism (urban and rural) and adaptive conservation strategies.
- Resilience and sustainability transitions in cultural heritage destinations.
- Slow tourism and mindful cultural heritage experiences.
- Community wellbeing and Socio-cultural tourism impacts.

Cultural Heritage Tourism Economics, Entrepreneurship and Creative Economies

- Economic valuation of cultural heritage and tourism multiplier effects.
- Cultural heritage-led regional development and domestic tourism opportunities.
- Cultural entrepreneurship, creative industries, and local cultural economies.
- Financing models, FDI, investment strategies, and public-private partnerships in cultural heritage tourism.

Cultural Human Resources and Tourism Education

- Professional training, interpretation skills, and cultural mediation in heritage tourism.
- Curriculum innovation and experiential learning in cultural heritage tourism education.
- Bridging cultural research, policy, and professional practice in heritage tourism development.
- Intergenerational Transmission, Youth Engagement and Diaspora Recreation in Tourism in Cultural Heritage Tourism.