

Tourist Psychology, Experience and Wellbeing

Track Chairs

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Track Overview

A human-centred approach to tourism cannot be explained solely through technological, managerial, or destination-level transformation. The sustainability and long-term value of tourism depend on how tourists think, feel, decide, behave, and derive meaning from their experiences before, during, and after travel. This track focuses on the psychological and behavioural foundations of tourism, examining how tourists form expectations, process information, evaluate experiences, and respond to changing travel conditions shaped by scarcity, uncertainty and perceived access.

Tourism is becoming more diverse as specialised and hybrid forms of travel move further into the mainstream. Examples include wellness, cosmetic, space, workation, solo, popular culture, fandom and sports tourism, alongside digital nomadism. These developments raise important questions about tourist motivation, identity, emotion, decision-making, and behaviour. Such contexts provide valuable opportunities to examine how tourists interpret, negotiate, and evaluate contemporary tourism experiences across different social, technological, and market conditions.

The track also considers the psychological implications of technology-enhanced tourism. AI-mediated service encounters, smart destination infrastructures, augmented and virtual reality, digital platforms, and immersive environments are influencing how tourists search, plan, consume, share, and remember tourism experiences. The value of these technologies depends on how tourists perceive, trust, engage with, and respond to them. Drawing on research in tourism experience, quality of life, and tourist psychology, the track examines tourism's contribution to wellbeing while also recognising negative responses such as anxiety, disappointment, digital fatigue, climate concern, perceived crowding, and exhaustion.

We welcome conceptual, empirical, and methodological papers that advance research on tourist psychology, experience, emotions, wellbeing, and human-centred tourism. Interdisciplinary contributions are encouraged, particularly those connecting psychology, marketing, consumer behaviour, human-computer interaction and destination experience design.

Intended Audience and Scholarly Contribution

The track is designed for researchers and practitioners working at the intersection of tourist behaviour, experience research, destination marketing, technology-enhanced tourism, and wellbeing. The track contributes by advancing a psychologically informed research agenda that examines how tourists think, feel, decide, behave, and derive meaning in tourism contexts shaped by technological, social, environmental, and market change. This will support theoretically grounded and practically relevant knowledge for tourism policy, destination management, and experience design.

Expanded Themes and Topics

Tourist Psychology, Decision-Making and Behaviour

- Cognition, motivation, emotion, memory, identity, meaning-making.
- Decisions under uncertainty, risk, scarcity, time/financial constraint and information overload.
- Expectations, perceived value, satisfaction, loyalty, recommendation and revisit behaviour.
- Behaviour change, responsible consumption, nudging, habits and sustainable choices.
- Cross-cultural, socio-economic and generational differences.

Tourist Emotions, Experience and Wellbeing

- Memorable experiences, attachment, emotional value and transformation.
- Wellbeing, quality of life, flourishing, life satisfaction, restoration and meaning.
- Positive states: excitement, hope, joy, inspiration, surprise, immersion and happiness.
- Negative and mixed responses, including anxiety, disappointment, regret, climate anxiety, digital fatigue and emotional exhaustion.
- Psychological restoration, social connection, resident wellbeing, community quality of life and dignity.
- Emotional theories explaining tourist experiences and behavioural responses.

Scarcity, Constraints and Tourist Adaptation

- Time, financial, spatial, resource and demand-driven scarcity.
- Responses to crowding, limited access, sold-out experiences, peak demand and capacity constraints.
- Scarcity appeals, exclusivity, urgency, perceived value and behavioural intentions.
- Adaptation to climate risk, mobility constraints, inflation, accessibility barriers and changing conditions.
- Scarcity in regenerative tourism, visitor management, capacity planning and experience design.

Destination Marketing, Image and Experience Design

- Image, personality, branding, storytelling and emotional positioning.
- Human-centred, inclusive, accessible and wellbeing-oriented experience design.
- Social media, influencers and platform-mediated destination perception.
- Segmentation, marketing intelligence and strategic positioning.
- Balancing competitiveness, authenticity, sustainability and visitor wellbeing.

Methods, Measurement and Theory Development

- Conceptual papers developing theories, frameworks, typologies and research agendas.
- Scale development/validation in experience, emotions, wellbeing and behaviour.
- Experimental, longitudinal, mixed-method, qualitative and cross-cultural designs, ESM/EMA, mobile-sensing and digital-trace approaches.
- Big data, analytics, sentiment analysis, psychophysiology, AI-assisted methods and synthetic data.
- Critical reflection on theory uses and stronger psychological foundations in tourism research.

Technology-Enhanced Tourism and Human-Technology Interaction

- AI-mediated services, smart infrastructures, AR/VR, platforms and immersive environments.
- Tourist perceptions, trust, engagement, autonomy, inclusion and ethical technology use.
- How technologies shape search, planning, consumption, memory and post-travel behaviour.
- Psychological and ethical conditions under which technology enhances or constrains experience.