

Provisional Programme

Final Conference on sustainable cultural tourism under the H2020 SmartCulTour project

Culture as Catalyst: Redefining Cultural Tourism for Sustainable Destinations

24 May 2023

Herman Teirlinckgebouw (Havenlaan 88, 1000 Brussels)

Although a variety of tourism trends post-Covid are based on more general changes in consumer behaviour, such as the emphasis on health, safety, and well-being, and the rising use of digital technologies, cultural tourism continues to be one of the main motivations for travel.

In other areas, visitors increasingly seek out destinations that prioritise environmental sustainability and responsible tourism practices. Outdoor and natural attractions such as national parks, gardens, and scenic routes are expected to continue to be popular among tourists.

The trend for local and authentic experiences will also accelerate as international travel increases and visitors seek to immerse themselves in the local culture and interact with locals, learning about local traditions and sharing their own experiences.

By introducing the SmartCulTour project tools and sharing the different experiences of the Living Labs with key target audiences, the conference will explore these emerging trends and identify priorities for destinations to harness the power of culture and local values to redefine the visitor experience.



8:45 **Welcome & Registration**

9: 15 **Introduction to the day – Jan van der Borg, KU Leuven University**

Opening session

- 9:20**
- Jan van der Borg, KU Leuven University
 - Vincent Nijs, Visit Flanders
 - Louise Haxthausen, Director, UNESCO Liaison Office with the European Union in Brussels
 - Kirsti Ala-Mutka, DG GROW
 - Jordi Tresseras, President, ICOMOS-ESPAÑA

10:30 **Coffee break**

Session on culture and tourism - An integrated approach to enrich the visitor experience

As cultural tourism becomes increasingly competitive, there is likely to be a greater focus on innovation and creativity in product development and marketing. This could include the development of new cultural experiences, routes and itineraries, events and products, as well as new marketing channels such as influencer marketing and experiential marketing.

This session will explore:

- 11:00**
- What impact digital transformation is having on the visitor experience through the incorporation of ICTs into cultural tourism product and service development (e.g. virtual and augmented reality, mobile apps, smart city technology, etc.);
 - How partnerships between tourism businesses and local communities can create more meaningful and authentic experiences for visitors;
 - How storytelling, including through heritage interpretation, art, music, and other forms of cultural expressions, is becoming a powerful tool to engage visitors and create a deeper connection with the local culture;
 - How sustainable tourism practices are becoming increasingly important to visitors, and how businesses can adopt sustainable practices to attract and retain eco-conscious visitors;
 - How visitors are increasingly seeking authentic cultural experiences, what “authentic” means in this context, and how destinations can provide better opportunities for cultural immersion in their tourism offer.

- Greg Richards, Breda University of Applied Sciences
- Fabrizio Orlando, Global Director, Industry Affairs, Trip Advisor
- Sneška Quaedvlieg-Mihailović, Secretary General, Europa Nostra (TBC)
- Matthew Rabagliati, Head of Policy, Research and Communications, UK National Commission for UNESCO
- Max Dubravko Fijacko, Tourism Expert, Interpret Europe
- Tamara Nikolić Đjerić, President of the Batana Ecomuseum

Chair and rapporteur: Peter Debrine, UNESCO



12:15

Lunch

Urban cultural tourism – Envisioning the future!

Exciting transformations are under way in the world of urban cultural tourism. Traditional hotspots such as Amsterdam and Venice are experiencing mounting pressure from visitors, emerging destinations that focus on experiences of daily life and community engagement are rapidly gaining popularity. The implications of such changes raise questions about the future of cultural urban tourism, and how we can make it sustainable or even regenerative (and what actually is regenerative cultural tourism).

We will discuss these topics in a lively and interdisciplinary panel discussion featuring experts from diverse fields such as industry, urban planning, local communities, cultural sectors, and academia. Together, we will explore what the future of urban cultural tourism might hold and how we can work towards achieving it.

13:45

- Lidija Petrić, FEBT, Split Living Lab
- Iris Kerst, Rotterdam Living Lab manager and programme manager of the Expertise Network Sustainable Urban Tourism
- Tim Fairhurst, European Tourism Association
- Daniel Basulto, TExTOUR
- David ter Avest, Rotterdam University of Applied Sciences

Chair and rapporteur: Ko Koens, Breda University of Applied Sciences

The future of rural cultural tourism and its potential to promote rural development

Tourism is an activity that contributes directly and indirectly to the development of rural areas, but this development must be sustainable. Rural tourism in all its forms, including cultural tourism, also has a high potential to stimulate local economic growth and social change due to its complementarity with other economic activities, its contribution to GDP and job creation, and its capacity to promote the dispersion of demand over time and over a wider territory.

In this session we will explore the different types of rural tourism, its characteristics, its relationship with culture and local development, and discuss tourism trends and the future of rural forms of cultural tourism and its potential.

14:30

- Fernando Blasco, TuHuesca
- Polihron Karapachov, DG AGRI
- Guillaume Corradino, Euromontana
- Francisco Vigalongo, Cultural Heritage & Tourism, European Regions Research and Innovation Network
- Klaus Ehrlich, RURALTOUR

Chair and rapporteur: Alun Jones, CIHEAM Zaragoza

Interactive workshop on the SmartCulTour tools and methods to achieve Sustainable Cultural Tourism

Arts-based and design-sciences-based methods and tools for social interventions are both very useful, but different. Why should you mix these two approaches? Placemaking as an art-based method combined with service design methods like the House of Quality and the Ideation Washing Machine are introduced in this interactive workshop by using a user-case.

15:15

Chair and rapporteur: Ella Björn, University of Lapland & Bert Smit, Breda University of Applied Sciences



16:00

Cultural tourism as a motor for local development: from EU regional policy to the EU Bauhaus – Marcos Ros, Member of the European Parliament

Participatory decision-making approaches in cultural tourism policy-making

Participatory decision-making approaches can help ensure that cultural tourism policies and initiatives are sustainable and aligned with local priorities and values. By involving local communities and other stakeholders in the decision-making process, policy-makers can better understand the social, cultural, and environmental impacts of tourism, and develop policies and initiatives that promote sustainable development.

This session will explore the forms of stakeholder engagement in tourism research and policy development (experiences of involvement and engagement of Living Labs, stakeholder communities and groups, tools and games to stimulate interaction), as well as community stakeholder participation in tourism policy development (Living Labs, case studies and stakeholder input frameworks).

16:10

- Ms Tamara Nikolić Đjerić, President of the Batana Ecomuseum
- Ms Griet Geudens, Scheldeland Living Lab Manager
- Ms Astrid Dickinger, Modul University
- Ms Martina De Sole, European Network of Living Labs

Chair and rapporteur: Matteo Rosati & Costanza Fidelbo, UNESCO

16:55

Coffee break

Closing plenary policy round table on the future of cultural tourism

Cultural tourism plays an important role in the European economy, estimated to represent 37 % of the total tourism sector. While tourism encourages access to and appreciation for the extensive collection of European cultural heritage, there are important current and future challenges and opportunities to account for, such as overtourism, digital transitions, green transitions, workforce shortages, accessibility, etc. This closing session will explore potential trends and needs from the point of view of visitors, industry, and policy in order to help provide a roadmap for sustainable cultural tourism development.

17:25

- Mr Manos Vougioukas, ECTN
- Prof. Dr. Germán Ortega Palomo, Universidad de Málaga
- Mr Simone Moretti, Breda University of Applied Sciences
- Ms Antonia Gravagnuolo, Be.CULTOUR
- Mr István Ujhelyi, Member of the European Parliament

Chair and rapporteur: Bart Neuts, SmartCulTour Coordinator

18:25

Closing remarks - Bart Neuts, SmartCulTour Coordinator

18:40

Light networking buffet

