

SPECIAL SESSION

“COLLABORATIVE INNOVATION AND DIGITAL CO-CREATION FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM FUTURES”

RELEVANCE OF THE TOPIC

The transformation of the tourism industry in the face of climate change, digitalization, and shifting societal values requires new paradigms of governance, strategic thinking, and stakeholder coordination. At the core of these challenges lies the imperative for more effective and forward-looking tourism management. This special session, anchored in the SHIFT research project (Sustainability-oriented, Highly interactive, and Innovation-based Framework for Tourism Marketing) highlights how management practices can integrate collaboration, technology, and co-creation to foster sustainable and resilient tourism ecosystems.

Tourism management must evolve from traditional models towards approaches that embrace systemic complexity, participatory governance, and cross-sector innovation. The papers included in this session address precisely this need by examining the design and implementation of collaborative marketing strategies, stakeholder engagement through co-creation platforms, and scenario planning as a strategic management tool. In doing so, they provide critical insights into how destination management organizations, policy makers, and tourism enterprises can anticipate global trends and co-develop inclusive and adaptive responses.

In a context marked by environmental, technological, and social transitions, this session, composed of five presentations (the first introducing the project and the remaining four presenting its core results), is highly relevant for scholars and practitioners seeking to reimagine tourism management as a discipline that not only responds to change but actively shapes sustainable futures through innovation, interactivity, and stakeholder synergy.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE TOPIC

This session is supported by a multidisciplinary theoretical foundation that connects strategic tourism management, collaborative marketing, and technology-enabled co-creation as key pillars of sustainable tourism transformation.

In the field of strategic management, recent literature highlights the importance of foresight and systems thinking to address global disruptions. Studies by Duan et al. (2021), Postma and Yeoman (2021), and Seyitoğlu and Costa (2022) emphasize the value of scenario planning in building adaptive and resilient tourism strategies.

Research on collaborative destination marketing draws on the framework proposed by Wang and Xiang (2007), which identifies trust and strategic alignment as core drivers of cooperation. This perspective is expanded by authors such as Ngo et al. (2018) and Wilke et al. (2019), who highlight the increasing importance of sustainability and innovation as key motivations for collaborative marketing practices in tourism.

The literature on digital co-creation explores how interactive platforms enable tourists, residents, and providers to co-produce value. Binkhorst and Dekker (2009) define co-creation as central to contemporary tourism experiences, while studies such as Chen et al. (2020) and Lin et al. (2017) show how digital tools foster engagement and shared innovation. Usability and persuasive design are further supported by Nielsen (1994) and Fogg (2009), whose models guide the development of effective and sustainability-oriented technologies.

Together, these theoretical perspectives offer an integrated framework for rethinking tourism management through collaboration, innovation, and long-term sustainability.

CONTRIBUTIONS

“Addressing macro impacts and scenario-based strategies for tourism industry resilience”, Machado, A. T. (Escola Superior de Comunicação Social, Instituto Politécnico de Lisboa), Severino, F. S. (Escola Superior de Hotelaria e Turismo do Estoril), Costa, T. (Escola Superior de Ciências Empresariais, Instituto Politécnico de Setúbal), Santos, Z. S. (Escola Superior de Comunicação Social, Instituto Politécnico de Lisboa), Calisto, M. L. (Escola Superior de Hotelaria e Turismo do Estoril)

“Motivations for marketing collaboration in sustainable tourism”, Calisto, M. L. (Escola Superior de Hotelaria e Turismo do Estoril), Costa, T. (Escola Superior de Ciências Empresariais, Instituto Politécnico de Setúbal), Severino, F. S. (Escola Superior de Hotelaria e Turismo do Estoril), Belo, M. (Escola Superior de Hotelaria e Turismo do Estoril), Machado, A. T. (Escola Superior de Comunicação Social, Instituto Politécnico de Lisboa)

on Resilience and Sustainable Regions

“Sustainability, technology, and co-creation: shaping the future of sustainable tourism”, Nunes, S. (Escola Superior de Ciências Empresariais, Instituto Politécnico de Setúbal), Santos, Z. S. (Escola Superior de Comunicação Social, Instituto Politécnico de Lisboa), Costa, T. (Escola Superior de Ciências Empresariais, Instituto Politécnico de Setúbal), Severino, F. S. (Escola Superior de Hotelaria e Turismo do Estoril), Machado, A. T. (Escola Superior de Comunicação Social, Instituto Politécnico de Lisboa)

“Shift platform: investigating user interaction design for the co-creation of tourism products”, Madeira, R. N. (Escola Superior de Tecnologia, Instituto Politécnico de Setúbal), Robalo, S. (Escola Superior de Tecnologia, Instituto Politécnico de Setúbal), Cordeiro, A. (Escola Superior de Tecnologia, Instituto Politécnico de Setúbal)